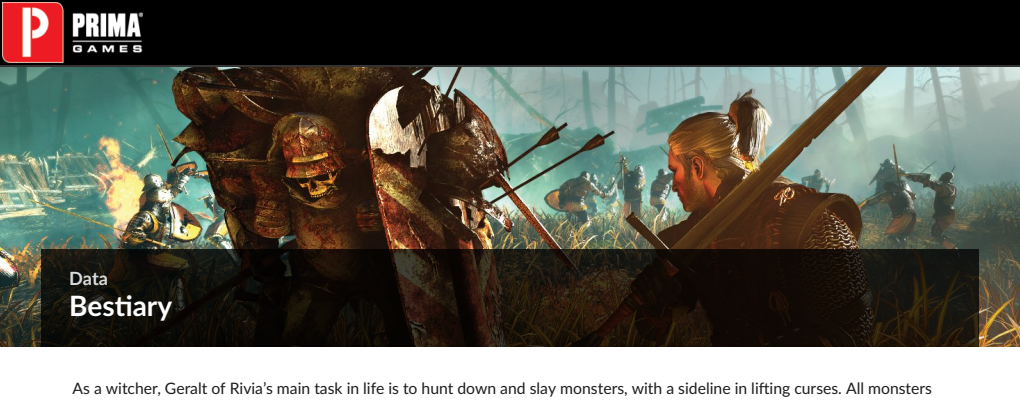


Data

Bestiary

As a witcher, Geralt of Rivia's main task in life is to hunt down and slay monsters, with a sideline in lifting curses. All monsters take full damage from silver swords and only partial damage from steel swords. The reverse is true, incidentally, when you use a silver sword against humans. Beyond that, different species of monsters have wildly varying strengths and weaknesses. Some are intuitive to a monster's nature, while others are a bit surprising. All should be exploited as ruthlessly as possible, using whatever skills and specialties your Geralt build has developed.

Monsters are grouped by species for this bestiary's purposes, since all creatures of a single species usually share similar drops, attack patterns, and vulnerabilities. Some monster species occur in several variations. Most variant monsters are just a more powerful version of a basic monster type, but there are exceptions to this, too. Certain variant versions of a monster may have special drops unique to that variant. Read each section carefully if you're having a hard time deciding how to fight a particular monster, or if you just want to learn a bit more about what rewards you can expect to loot from a dead monster's body.

Note that the drops for each creature species are separated into the categories "alchemy drops" and "other drops." This division is extremely important to how the alchemist tree skill Harvester works. Taking the Harvester skill increases the drop rate of a monster's alchemy items but does not affect the drop rate of other items you can obtain by defeating that monster. An alchemy item is defined by the game as any item that has value as an alchemical substance. That is, an item is an alchemical substance if it contains vitriol, rebis, aether, quebrith, hydragenum, vermilion, sol, caelum, or fulgur, and therefore can be used to brew potions, oils, and bombs.

Which items are dropped when a monster dies is determined basically at random. Some monsters may drop multiples of a given item, especially if slain by a Geralt that has the Harvester skill. Usually a monster yields some drops upon its defeat, but not always. If you're not sure if you've grabbed a monster's drops or not, scan the area with your medallion after you finish a battle. Monster drops always highlight in bright orange if they're present, like other types of loot. Monster carcasses can sometimes be hard to see if you've been fighting in tall grass or shallow water.

Drowners

Drowner	
Resistances	Poison
	Bleeding
Vulnerabilities	Incineration
	Knockdown
	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Drowner Brain
	Essence of Water
	Amethyst Dust
Other Drops	Twine
	Cloth
	Drowner Trophy
	Orens

The first time you see a monster in *The Witcher 2*, it is a drowner eating a fallen soldier. It attacks you, but you defeat it easily with a basic silver sword. This experience sums up the drowner. Although frightful and grotesque on the surface, these fishlike humanoids are among the weakest creatures in the game. You can occasionally find them active during the day, but drowners only come out in force at night, when they swarm in packs led by elite drowners called drowned dead. When drowners led by a drowned dead attack in packs, they can be extremely dangerous, especially since you're inclined to underestimate them.

They favor watery areas like sewers, swamps, coasts, and riverbanks. So, as you might expect, you encounter them through most of the game when you're near watery areas. In the Prologue, you can find them prowling the sewers beneath La Valette Castle. In Chapter 1, they come out at night near the waterfall and in the swampy areas around the bandit's hideout. In Chapter 2, you encounter them in the quest **Lost Lambs** (on Roche's route) and along the beaches near Malget's hut at night.

Drowners are relatively speedy opponents, so light attacks are best used to quickly home in on their locations and eliminate them. Drowners are immune to poison and bleeding but are surprisingly vulnerable to fire. Dancing stars and conflagrations can come in handy for whittling down a pack's numbers rapidly. They are also vulnerable to most traps and easy to lure over them. Finally, drowners are vulnerable to knockdown, so you can use Aard to easily incapacitate and slaughter them one by one. Read the book *Drowners: A Textbook for Initiates of the Order of the Flaming Rose* to gain knowledge of drowners.

Killing a drowner yields two unique, relatively useful drops. One is the drowner brain, which is used primarily in crafting amethyst dust. It can be wise to hold on to drowner brains through the end of Chapter 2, just in case you run out of amethyst dust and need to make more. Once you get into Chapter 3, you should have a good idea of how much amethyst dust you'll need through the end of the game. At that point, you can safely sell off the brains if you're pretty sure you won't be using them.

The other noteworthy drowner drop is essence of water, which is always used when crafting runes. It's much cheaper to craft runes than to buy them, so it's worth your while to farm drowners for essences of water when you're in a chapter where they occur. Drowners don't occur in Chapter 3, so grind out some extras ahead of time for use in Chapter 3. Although you can craft essences of water from a diagram, the process consumes some relatively expensive ingredients.

Drowners are believed to be the spirits of evil men and criminals who have drowned or otherwise died in water. Drowners are either the body or the hateful spirit of the dead, returned to drag other living creatures down into a watery grave. Drowners tear their dead prey to bits with their claws and consume the soggy remains.

There is only one mention of a drowner in the translated *Witcher* novels. In the story "The Edge of the World" from *The Last Wish*, a quote from an ancient manual says that a witcher should be paid no more than "one silver penny or three halves" for slaying a drowner. Even the ancients knew these guys are pretty easy to kill.

Drowned Dead

An elite form of drowner that acts as pack leader, a drowned dead has more vitality than the average drowner and can hit much harder. They only occur as part of a drowner pack after nightfall. You encounter them in Chapter 1 in the swamps around the bandit hideout and in Chapter 2 along the northern stretch of beach near the site of Sabrina Glevissig's execution. When you realize a drowner pack you're fighting contains a drowned dead, approach the battle more cautiously than usual. Keep Quen up in case the drowned dead jumps you from behind. The overall best strategy for dealing with drowned deads is to pick off the rest of the drowner pack with light attacks, then hammer away at the drowned dead with strong attacks.

Nekkers

Nekker	
Resistances	None
Vulnerabilities	Bleeding
	Poison
	Stun
	Knockdown
	Incineration
Alchemy Drops	Nekker Claws
	Nekker Eyes
	Nekker Heart
	Nekker Teeth
Other Drops	Cloth
	Twine
	Nekker Trophy

Nekkers can be thought of as land-bound, burrowing drowners. Individually, nekkers are very weak, but they always occur in groups of around half a dozen at the least. A group of nekkers can go from harmless to threatening in a short period of time if they surround you and attack from behind. Much like drowners, they originate in some way from the bodies of the dead. The relationship is less clear, though. It is known only that nekker nests tend to form and thrive near battlefields and other areas that have seen mass die-offs.

Nekkers inhabit dark, humid areas that are neither too wet nor too dry. Favored habitats include forests and caves. You encounter nekkers in the forests and cave areas around Flotsam in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, nekkers lurk in the mines beneath Vergen and in the forests to the north of the city. In Chapter 3, you can encounter nekkers in the forests and caves north of Loc Muinne, but only on Roche's route.

Nekkers have no immunities or vulnerabilities. You can fight them any way you wish. The most efficient way to fight nekkers is generally to use some bombs or traps for crowd control, then focus on pure damage output once their numbers are whittled down. Nekkers are relatively quick and agile opponents, so light attacks are best for quickly moving from one target to the next. Read the book *Nekkers in the Mist* to gain knowledge of nekkers.

There are four drops unique to the nekker. All have their uses, but they tend to be relatively limited. Nekker claws in a standard game are used only in crafting the armor of Ysgith, whose diagram you obtain in Chapter 3. If you wish to make this armor, put five nekker claws into storage early in the game (and make sure you kill at least one troll). Otherwise, you can simply sell nekker claws as you obtain them for extra cash. You kill dozens of nekkers in the course of a game and will probably obtain well over a hundred claws.

Nekker eyes are worth keeping on hand until you reach Chapter 3, since you can use them along with drowner brains to craft amethyst dust. Once you reach Chapter 3, you should have a good idea of how much amethyst dust you need to finish the game with, so you can sell off any nekker eyes you're pretty sure you won't need.

Always hang on to nekker hearts, as you can use them to craft two very useful items: fury traps, which cast Axii on all opponents within a certain radius when the trap is sprung, and Ysgith runes, which add a valuable damage bonus and a Bleeding critical effect to swords. Nekker hearts are heavy, so keep them in storage until you're ready to use them in crafting.

Nekker teeth have no useful role in crafting and should always be sold off for orens immediately—unless you're playing a game on Dark mode. On Dark mode, put at least nine nekker teeth into storage for use in crafting the silver sword Anathema and the steel sword Ultimatum. After that, you can sell the teeth off for much-needed extra cash.

Nekker Warriors

Nekker Warrior	
Resistances	None
Vulnerabilities	Bleeding
	Poison
	Stun
	Knockdown
	Incineration
Alchemy Drops	Nekker Claws
	Nekker Eyes
	Nekker Heart
	Nekker Teeth
Other Drops	Cloth
	Twine
	Nekker Trophy
	Nekker Warrior Blood

Every large group of nekkers is accompanied by at least a few nekker warriors. These creatures are especially large and brawny nekkers that mark their faces with red clay. They possess more vitality than their smaller kin and hit much harder. They're also more aggressive than other nekkers, so you often end up forced to engage them when you first encounter a nekker group. Focus on eliminating the weaker nekkers first and saving the other nekkers for last.

Nekker warriors yield one unique drop, in addition to the other drops you usually get for killing nekkers. That drop is warrior nekker blood, which is required in Chapter 3 to complete the quest **An Encrypted Manuscript**. The game considers this a quest item rather than an alchemy or crafting item, so it has no weight and is worth only 1 oren. Hold on to any warrior nekker blood you happen to acquire throughout the course of the game.

Endregas

Endrega	
Resistances	Poison
Vulnerabilities	Bleeding
	Stun
	Knockdown
	Incineration
Alchemy Drops	Endrega Embryo
	Endrega Jaw
	Endrega Saliva
	Endrega Teeth
	Endrega Venom
Other Drops	Endrega Hide
	Endrega Trophy
	Diagram: Endrega Hide Armor Reinforcements

Endregas resemble spiders but behave more like insects. Even at that, there's something genuinely unsettling about endrega physiology. Although they are six-legged like insects, they have jaws lined with teeth like a vertebrate's. Endregas live in temperate to humid forests, where they can drop from trees to surprise their prey or battle intruders who draw too close to their nurseries. An endrega's heavily armored body and poisonous bite make it a dangerous opponent. They are a bit slow, so they're easy to handle alone, but if you see one endrega then there are probably at least two more lurking somewhere nearby.

There are many different varieties of endrega, because the species is divided into an insect-like caste system. The humble endrega is a worker at the low end of the totem pole. The endrega warrior fights off predators and is a bit rarer, with the rarer endrega guard patrolling nurseries. At the core of endrega society is the queen endrega, which lays eggs that must mature in coccoons. The queen endrega is very rare and only comes out of hiding when the colony's nursery is threatened.

Endregas occur most commonly in forests and occasionally in temperate caves. They are only friendly to arachasae and attack virtually any other species that enters their territory. You encounter endregas in the forests outside Flotsam in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, you can only encounter them by heading to the area to the north of the Visionary's hut, near the shrine to Sabrina Glevissig. In Chapter 3, you can encounter endregas in the forests to the north of Loc Muinne on Roche's route. On Iorveth's route, you can encounter them in the secret cave that leads into Loc Muinne and also in the caverns that lead to the lost secret laboratory of Dearhenna.

Endregas can barrel toward you with a sudden charging attack, but otherwise are slow. Strong attacks are best suited to smashing through their heavily armored bodies. Endregas are immune to poison but vulnerable to bleeding, incineration, stun, and knockdown. Their wide, low body structure makes them particularly vulnerable to traps, as it's hard for them to move through a trapped area without triggering them. In addition, endregas are insectoids and therefore take additional damage from a silver sword coated in insectoid oil. Read the book *Three Years Among the Endregas* to gain knowledge of endregas.

Creatures of this species can drop six unique materials, five of which count as alchemy materials. Endrega embryos should be hoarded, as they're extremely useful. They are a necessary component in crafting conflagration traps and also contain fulgur, which is often required to brew high-end potions like Tawny Owl. You can also get endrega embryos by destroying endrega coccoons during the quest **The Endrega Contract** in Chapter 1.

Endrega teeth are also worth hoarding, especially in Chapter 1. You need 15 endrega teeth to make the jagged blade and can also use them to craft endrega hide reinforcements, which can be useful for slotting out armor you're going to be wearing for a short period of time. Conveniently, endregas sometimes drop the diagram for endrega hide reinforcements.

Endrega venom is required to craft clawer traps, so keep it if you think you'll ever want to use such a trap. The clawer's function is mostly duplicated by the reusable snares you can pick up in Chapter 1, so you could begin selling this material off in Chapter 2.

Endrega jaws can be sold off, as they aren't used in any sort of crafting and the alchemy reagent they contain, vermilion, has many other common sources. Endrega hide can be sold off in a standard game, where it cannot be used to craft anything particularly useful. If you are playing on Dark mode, you will need five endrega hides to use when crafting the Blasphemer's set.

Endrega Warriors

An endrega warrior is an endrega with a long, spiked tail. As you might expect, it's a bit more aggressive than a normal endrega and hits a bit harder. It's not any tougher and can be defeated just as easily as its cousins. You sometimes encounter endrega warriors alongside arachasae, particularly in the secret cave you can opt to pass through in Chapter 3.

Endrega Guards

You primarily encounter endrega guards near the endrega nurseries you encounter in Chapter 1, as part of **The Endrega Contract**. Their bodies are a bit higher off the ground and more compact than an ordinary endrega's. They don't hit any harder than the average endrega, but they do have a bit more vitality. They tend to appear in swarms with other endregas.

Endrega Queens

Endrega Queen	
Resistances	Poison
Vulnerabilities	Bleeding
	Stun
	Knockdown
	Incineration
Alchemy Drops	Endrega Embryo
	Endrega Jaw
	Endrega Saliva
	Endrega Teeth
	Endrega Venom
	Queen Endrega Pheromones
	Greater Vitality Mutagen
Other Drops	Endrega Hide
	Endrega Trophy
	Diagram: Endrega Hide Armor Reinforcements

Endrega queens are enormous compared to standard endregas. They have a similar charging attack, but their large size means they hit much harder and can charge much farther. They also can attack a distant foe by spraying poison at it. Endrega queens are easiest to damage if you can hit them from the back or sides, as they can block head-on attacks. You can also stun them with Yrden to force them into dropping their guard, or lure them over traps. You only encounter endrega queens during **The Endrega Contract** quest in Chapter 1 or during **The Secrets of Loc Muinne** on Iorveth's route in Chapter 3.

You can pick up two extra drops from an endrega queen, in addition to the usual endrega drops. One is the queen endrega's pheromones, a requirement for completing the quest **An Encrypted Manuscript** in Chapter 3. It is possible to sell off the queen endrega's pheromones or use them in alchemy, so be careful. Put them into storage once you've obtained them to make sure this doesn't happen.

The other extra drop is the greater vitality mutagen. While mutagens usually drop at random when you fight foes, the queen endrega is one of the few enemies in the game that consistently drop a specific type of mutagen. The greater vitality mutagen is one of the better mutagen drops, too, and worth slotting.

Rotfiends

Rotfiend	
Resistances	Poison
	Bleeding
Vulnerabilities	Stun
	Knockdown
	Incineration
Alchemy Drops	Necrophage Blood
	Necrophage Eyes
	Necrophage Skin
	Necrophage Teeth
	Rotfiend Tongue
	Diamond Dust
Other Drops	Rotfiend Trophy

The rotfiend is another monster that spawns from mass death. When bodies are left to rot and fester after war, plague, or famine, they inevitably draw the attention of rotfiends. Rotfiends feed on all types of carrion but have a preference for human corpses and flesh. When packs of rotfiends become bold enough, they begin attacking living humans that pass through their territory. It is difficult to exterminate all of the rotfiends in an area due to their great resiliency. They're best driven off by destroying their food supply, which means at the very least burning corpses that cannot be buried properly.

You encounter groups of rotfiends primarily in Chapter 2. They can be found in the mine tunnels around Vergen and swarming around the unburied corpses around the Kaedweni Camp. In Chapter 3, they're in the sewers beneath Loc Muinne.

Rotfiends are best fought with light attacks, moving rapidly from target to target. When you deplete a rotfiend's vitality, it seizes up briefly before exploding into a poisonous, flammable cloud of gas. This explosion does much heavier damage than any of a rotfiend's usual attacks, so roll away from it. You may need to get clear of the entire rotfiend pack, as the explosion and fumes damage other rotfiends nearby. You sometimes see chain reactions of rotfiend explosions, which can work to your advantage if you're not stuck in the middle of them. Rotfiends attack with a lunging, leaping motion, so never assume one is too far away to damage you. Oil your blade with necrophage oil to damage them more quickly. Bombs and traps are also useful for keeping swarms under control. To gain knowledge of rotfiends, read the book *The Horrors of War: Rotfiends*.

You can get five unique materials from defeating rotfiends, almost all of them worth keeping on hand. Necrophage blood and necrophage skin should be stockpiled, as they can be used to craft oil. Necrophage skin can also be used to craft leather and magic wraps. Necrophage eyes can be sold freely, as they aren't required for crafting and contain vitriol, which is easily obtained from other sources. Necrophage teeth should be kept in storage until Chapter 3 or so, since they can be used to craft extra diamond dust if you need it. Rotfiend tongue has no crafting use and contains caelum, an alchemical substance you can obtain in other ways. So rotfiend tongues can be sold freely, though you may want to keep one in storage. You can substitute a rotfiend tongue for the harpy egg required to complete the quest **An Encrypted Manuscript** in Chapter 3.

Greater Rotfiends

The greater rotfiend is larger and stronger than common rotfiends, dealing more damage and able to soak up more damage, too. It also explodes when its vitality is depleted, but the explosion is more damaging and spreads a larger cloud of gas. It attacks using tactics similar to those of regular rotfiends, but its strength can make it very dangerous if it jumps you while you're trying to deal with other members of the pack. Greater rotfiends are better fought with strong attacks rather than light attacks, so you can put them down more quickly.

Greater rotfiends thrive in cave environments and are primarily encountered there. Greater rotfiends do not roam the fields around the Kaedweni Camp in Chapter 2 but can be encountered in the camp cave and in the various caves and tunnels near Vergen. A lone greater rotfiend can be encountered in Chapter 1, in the cave you venture into in order to find ostmurk. This is the first rotfiend of any sort you encounter in the game.

Wraiths

Wraith	
Resistances	Poison
	Bleeding
Vulnerabilities	Stun
	Incineration
	Knockdown
Alchemy Drops	Essence of Death
	Amethyst Dust
	Diamond Dust
Other Drops	Wraith Trophy

Wraiths are the spirits of those who died with unfinished business in this world, often a simple grudge against all who still live. Wraiths have a connection to the site of their death or burial and often patrol these areas. They are not mere apparitions, but tangible beings that wield very solid, deadly swords. Some wraiths can be spoken to and even negotiated with, if the tie binding them to this earth is something specific like duty or revenge. Most wraiths are implacable embodiments of wrath that must be slain, like any other breed of monster.

You encounter wraiths in Chapter 1 during the quest **In the Claws of Madness**. During Chapter 2, they spawn regularly at night when you enter the burned village outside Vergen. They also spawn while you investigate the Dwarven Catacombs in the course of completing **Death Symbolized** and (on Iorveth's route) **With Flickering Heart**. You can summon them infinitely in the basement of Malget's house if you light the candles in an incorrect sequence. Finally, you must fight a series of infinitely respawning wraiths during the Chapter 1 quest **Melitele's Heart** and the Chapter 2 quest (on Roche's route) **The Blood Curse**.

Wraiths appear to fly just above the ground, but they can still trigger traps. They are swift enemies and are best fought with light attacks. Be careful if you riposte their blows, as the wraith may prove quicker than you. Wraiths are very vulnerable to Aard, which knocks them from the air and gives you an opening to attack while they're helpless. You can also easily set a wraith aflame, making them vulnerable to Igni, dragon's dream, and dancing stars. Wraiths take extra damage from specter oil. Be sure to oil your blade before you settle in to fight a great swarm of wraiths. Read the book *Wraiths: Fear and Trembling* to gain knowledge of wraiths.

Wraiths have only one unique drop material, the essence of death. You must give this material to Anezka as part of completing the quest **Melitele's Heart** in Chapter 1. In a standard game, it is only used to craft magic wraps but should still be stockpiled since it contains the rare alchemical substance fulgur. In Dark mode, you use essence of death to craft the silver sword Virgin in Chapter 2.

Bruxae

In terms of mythology, the bruxa is a wholly separate creature from the wraith. She is a form of female vampire that can assume the guise of a beautiful woman. When she feeds, however, she becomes bestial and terrifying. Bruxae usually take lovers that fall under their power and willingly supply their blood, until they waste away and die. When threatened, they can blind and deafen foes with the terrible force of their screeching.

In *The Witcher 2*, though, the bruxa is a variant of wraith. She has the same characteristics, shares a similar appearance, and even drops the same types of materials upon death. Bruxae usually, but not always, have more vitality than the average wraith when they appear. They attack with swords, using the wraiths' same one-two thrust. You can read the book *Bruxae—Eulogists of Death* to learn more about bruxae.

You can encounter a powerful and devious pack of bruxae in the course of completing the quest **Little Sisters**. You can also encounter bruxae spawning alongside wraiths in Chapter 3, when you explore the areas where the quest **The Secrets of Loc Muinne** takes place.

The short story "A Grain of Truth" in the collection *The Last Wish* concerns a bruxa named Vereena.

Knight Wraiths

These creatures appear only in Chapter 2, inhabiting the cursed battlefield that lies between Vergen and the Kaedweni Camp. Knight wraiths are soldiers caught up in the blood curse of Sabrina Glevissig, forced to repeat the events of the Battle of Brenna forever until the curse is broken. Knight wraiths fight like the soldiers and knights they once were and have a basically humanoid form. They are more resistant to knockdown than ordinary wraiths and bruxae but otherwise share all of the same characteristics and drops.

Knight wraiths can be fought exactly as you'd fight a sword-wielding human opponent. Individual knight wraiths are not dangerous, but they can spawn infinitely on the cursed battlefield and it's difficult to kill them more quickly than they spawn. When you leave the cursed battlefield on Iorveth's route in Chapter 2, knight wraiths and regular wraiths pour out behind you. It's best to fight them with the help of the Scoia'tael troop that camps nearby.

Note

When knight wraiths appear in the arena, they're called zombie soldiers.

Harpies

Harpy	
Resistances	None
Vulnerabilities	Poison
	Bleeding
	Incineration
	Knockdown
	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Harpy Egg
	Harpy Eyes
	Harpy Feathers
	Harpy Saliva
Other Drops	Harpy Claws
	Cloth
	Robust Cloth
	Twine
	Leather
	Hardened Leather
	Orens
	Harpy Trophy

Harpies are humanoid bird-monsters famed for their thieving ways. They build nests in mountainous regions and then swoop down on human settlements below, stealing farm animals and shiny objects. Harpies live and hunt in enormous packs, led by more elite members of the species that are larger and stronger than the common harpy. The strongest forms of harpy are said to be intelligent and to possess a certain measure of magical power. Each harpy colony is ruled by a queen, the strongest and smartest member of the race.

Harpies are first encountered in Chapter 2. On Iorveth's route you can find them thronging the area around the Old Quarry, which is the entrance to a remote area called the harpy lair. These harpies are the subject of the quests **The Harpy Contract** and **The Queen Harpy Contract**. You can also find harpies in the forests north of Vergen. On Roche's route, you encounter a group of rapidly spawning harpies just outside the Visionary's hut. In Chapter 3, you can encounter harpies in an area north of the town square in Loc Muinne.

Harpies are fliers, much like wraiths, but they are still vulnerable to traps. They tend to use hit-and-run tactics, landing a combo and then retreating slightly. They are best fought using light attacks and are extremely vulnerable to Aard, which knocks them down and leaves them helpless for a few moments. Their feathered bodies are also extremely vulnerable to incineration, making Igni and dancing stars useful when battling groups of them. Often it is best to dispatch ordinary harpies with light attacks, then use your signs and other witcher's tricks against more elite members of the species. You can read the book *Harpies—Daughters of the Gale* to gain knowledge of harpies.

The kleptomaniacal nature of the harpy means that it tends to drop a great deal of loot upon death, including a variety of crafting materials and orens. There are five unique materials that only members of the harpy species can drop. Harpy eggs are a relatively rare drop and you should probably keep whatever you get. A harpy egg is required for the quest **An Encrypted Manuscript**. Most Geralt builds can simply sell off harpy eyes, but alchemist builds may want to keep them. Harpy eyes contain aether, an alchemical substance required in many different bombs and potions but relatively difficult to obtain.

Harpy feathers are perhaps the harpy's most ubiquitous and valuable drop. They can be sold for 9 orens apiece, making them very useful for generating large amounts of cash quickly. In crafting, harpy feathers are only used to make the steel sword Caerme. In Dark mode, harpy feathers are needed to make the Oathbreaker's trousers, the Kinslayer's armor, and the Kinslayer's gauntlets. You also need to amass a very large number of harpy feathers to complete the quest **A Sackful of Fluff**.

Harpy saliva can be sold off freely, as it has no role in crafting and contains only caelum, which is easily obtained. Harpy claws contain no alchemical substance and have no real role in crafting, so they can also be sold off freely.

The short story "A Grain of Truth" in the book *The Last Wish* contains a passing reference to harpies: "Something sitting in the crown of an enormous oak shrieked and hissed. It could have been a harpy, or an ordinary wildcat. The witcher didn't stop to check."

Erynias

Erynias are larger and swifter than common harpies, with more vitality. They wear crude mirrorlike armor and bracers mounted with crystals. Usually you find an erynia or two acting as commander wherever you find a large group of harpies spawning.

Celaeno Harpies

Celaeno harpies are the nobility of the harpy race. They are stronger, swifter, tougher, and, more importantly, more intelligent than the lower orders of harpy. Although not truly sentient, celaeno harpies are much cleverer than the lower members of their species. They take harpy kleptomania to a new level by stealing dreams from members of other races. They encase the dreams in magic crystals. Anyone who holds the crystal can experience the feelings of the dream or view it by inserting it into a special projector. Mages find the power encased on the dream crystals useful in their work and sometimes breed harpies because of that.

Celaeno harpies can only be encountered in Chapter 2, primarily on Iorveth's route. You can fight a great number of them both at the harpy nest north of Vergen, at the Old Quarry, and within the harpy lair. Eight celaeno harpies act as the retinue of the harpy queen. Celaeno harpies are substantially more difficult to fight than erynias or standard harpies, due to having a much higher vitality than lesser members of their race. They also hit extremely hard, which makes even a small group of them a serious threat.

Harpy Queen

Harpy Queen	
Resistances	None
Vulnerabilities	Poison
	Bleeding
	Incineration
	Knockdown
	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Harpy Egg
	Harpy Eyes
	Harpy Feathers
	Harpy Saliva
Other Drops	Harpy Claws
	Cloth
	Robust Cloth
	Twine
	Leather
	Hardened Leather
	Orens
	Harpy Trophy
	Harpy (Sword)

The harpy queen rules the harpy colony near Vergen from within the confines of the harpy lair. She can only be encountered on Iorveth's route, as part of the **Hunting Magic** main quest and **The Harpy Queen** side quest. While she is by far the strongest and toughest form of harpy, what makes her dangerous is that she only appears alongside her huge retinue of celaeno harpies. Upon defeat, she drops the silver sword Harpy.

Arachasae

Arachas	
Resistances	Poison
	Bleeding
	Incineration
	Knockdown
	Stun
Vulnerabilities	None
Alchemy Drops	Arachas Eyes
	Arachas Armor
	Amethyst Dust
	Diamond Dust
Other Drops	Arachas Trophy

The arachas is one of the first enemies in the game that occurs alone rather than in packs. It's a huge creature, similar in shape and size to the endrega queen. The arachas favors a similar fighting style, too. The arachas is heavily armored and frequently blocks attacks made to its front, then charges forward to batter its attacker back. The arachas hits extremely hard due to its enormous size. Arachasae occur largely alone and tend to prefer temperate forest environments. They sometimes dwell in caves or rocky basins.

You battle an arachas in Chapter 1 as part of the main quest **The Assassins of Kings**. In Chapter 2, you can encounter one hidden in a ravine outside the gates of the Kaedweni Camp and another one north of the Visionary's hut, near the shrine to Sabrina Glevissig. In Chapter 3 on Iorveth's route, there's one in the secret tunnel beneath Loc Muinne.

Arachasae block attacks from the front, so roll around to the back and sides to damage one more easily. This shouldn't be too difficult, as arachasae are slow enemies when they aren't charging. You can afford to use strong attacks against them, so long as you're at the creature's back or sides. The arachas has no particular vulnerability and must be overcome with pure damage. Extraordinary measures like freezing and instant kills are also effective, though perhaps overkill. You can increase your damage output when battling an arachas by oiling your silver sword with insectoid oil.

Arachasae drop two unique materials. Arachas eyes are required for the quest **Melitele's Heart** in Chapter 1 and otherwise contain fulgur, which makes them useful for making high-end potions. Arachas armor is used in crafting the armor Dearg Ruadhri and the ceremonial steel sword of Deithwen. It contains quebrith, but this substance is easily obtained in other ways.

Bullvore

Bullvore	
Resistances	Poison
	Bleeding
	Knockdown
Vulnerabilities	Incineration
	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Bullvore Brain
	Necrophage Blood
	Necrophage Eyes
	Necrophage Skin
	Necrophage Teeth
Other Drops	Cloth
	Twine
	Bullvore Trophy

The bullvore is an enormous specimen of necrophage, related to the rotfiend but exponentially more dangerous. It draws its name from its bull-like head, which is stuffed with sharp, flesh-rending teeth. Most bullvores dwell among lesser creatures like nekkers and rotfiends, rather than other members of their own species. The bullvore's steps shake the ground around it. Its charging attack is devastating, and it can attack from a distance with a deadly poison spray.

You begin encountering bullvores in Chapter 2. Bullvores infest the abandoned mine shafts around Vergen, and there's one in the camp cave beneath the Kaedweni Camp. You also fight what is basically a bullvore during the course of the **Little Sisters** quest on Roche's route, if you make certain decisions. In Chapter 3, you can fight a pair of bullvores in the sewers beneath Loc Muinne.

As with most very large creatures, the bullvore's main weakness is its own slow speed. You can attack it with strong blows with impunity if you get to the creature's back or sides. You can even attack it head on, and the bullvore only occasionally blocks. Be sure to quickly dodge-roll away when it does begin to block, as that usually means it's soon going to charge. Since the bullvore is a necrophage, it takes extra damage from necrophage oil. The creature is also vulnerable to being stunned and incinerated, so signs like Igni and Aard are quite useful in these fights.

The bullvore has only one unique drop, the bullvore brain. You need a bullvore brain to complete the quest **An Encrypted Manuscript** in Chapter 3. It also contains fulgur, which makes it useful in crafting high-end potions.

Trolls

Troll	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Knockdown
Vulnerabilities	Poison
	Incineration
	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Troll Tongue
	Troll Skin
Other Drops	Cloth
	Leather
	Twine
	Orens
	Troll Trophy

Trolls are enormous beasts, primitive yet clearly sapient. Trolls are enormously, unthinkably strong, but fortunately they are also slow, clumsy, and got out of the habit of eating humans centuries ago. Now trolls only attack humans who are trying to attack them, a rare but still regrettable sight. You can easily reason or bargain with a troll, in fact, if you can figure out what it's saying in its slurred speech. Male trolls often put themselves to useful work building and maintaining bridges over rivers, in exchange for tolls from those who pass by. These tolls are spent mostly on vodka, as trolls are notorious drunks. She-trolls take care of their lairs, fight off predators, and prepare food. A troll deprived of his wife is a truly piteous sight, for a troll's heart is far more sensitive than its thick hide.

You have several chances to interact with trolls in the game. In Chapter 1, you can slay or befriend a troll in Flotsam in the quest **Troll Trouble**. In Chapter 2, you inevitably cross paths with a pair of trolls that live outside Vergen. There's another troll that can only be encountered on Roche's path, rampaging near the edge of the cursed battlefield to the southeast. You can avoid this troll, but you cannot befriend it.

Trolls hurl enormous rocks at their opponents or throw their tremendous weight into a forceful charge. Fortunately, trolls are quite stupid, and may not notice you're there at all if you get behind them. Strong attacks slowly but surely hack away at a troll's robust store of vitality. Roll to evade the troll's attacks, then do great damage by hitting it from behind. Bombs and daggers can damage a troll from a safe distance, provided the troll doesn't figure out where you are. Trolls have few vulnerabilities, but they are one of the few monstrous species in the game that are vulnerable to poison. An application of arachnid oil to your silver sword can help put a troll down quickly.

You can harvest two unique materials from a troll's carcass. Troll tongue is required to complete the quest **Melitele's Heart** and in Dark mode to craft the Kinslayer's trousers. While you can often buy troll tongues if you need to, their rarity means any troll tongue you obtain should be placed into storage for future use. Be careful not to accidentally use it in alchemy. Troll skin is a pure crafting material required to create the armor of Ys and magic wraps, so these diagrams become useless when you receive them in Chapter 3 if you've been exclusively befriending trolls.

While trolls do not appear in either of the original *Witcher* novels available in English, there is a passage in the short story "The Voice of Reason" from the collection *The Last Wish* that describes them in passing: "One day I ride up and what do I see? A bridge. And under that bridge sits a troll and demands every passerby pay him. Those who refuse have a leg injured, sometimes both. So I go to the alderman: 'How much will you give me for that troll?' He's amazed. 'What are you talking about?' he asks. 'Who will repair the bridge if the troll's not there? He repairs it regularly with the sweat of his brow, solid work, first rate. It's cheaper to pay his toll.'"

Elementals

Elemental	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Poison
	Incineration
	Knockdown
Vulnerabilities	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Elemental Stone
	Amethyst Dust
	Diamond Dust
Other Drops	Red Meteorite Ore
	Yellow Meteorite Ore
	Blue Meteorite Ore
	Elemental Trophy

These creatures are often called golems, though this is technically a misnomer. A true golem was created by a sorcerer and given life through its name-word. It is intelligent, but in an artificial and limited sort of way. The elemental has a similar appearance but is otherwise a very different sort of creature. Elementals are beings summoned from the elemental planes and bound into the service of a mage. The greater beings of the upper planes are far beyond the ability of most mages to control, so any elemental you encounter is likely a younger and weaker spirit. That does not mean you should take them lightly. Even the weakest beings of the elemental planes can snuff out a mortal's life with but a single blow. You should prepare carefully and use cautious tactics when battling them.

Try to get behind or beside an elemental before you begin attacking it. Before battle with an elemental, always drink potions to increase your defenses and oil your blades with Falka's blood to increase your damage. Elementals are quite speedy for their size, so sometimes you have no choice but to attack one head on. In that case, hit it with strong blows until it blocks, then quickly dodge-roll out of the way. After blocking, the elemental counterattacks, usually with a charging attack or a powerful blow that almost always knocks you down. If you make a mistake in battle with an elemental, you can be dead before you know it. Note that although the two types of elemental have very different appearances, they share resistances and drops.

Earth Elemental

Earth elementals resemble living boulders. They are used by mages primarily as sentinels, to destroy any intruder that attempts to get into a forbidden area (usually, somewhere a mage is storing something interesting). An elemental happily slays any being its master has not ordered it to spare, which makes them brutally efficient watchdogs. You encounter earth elementals only in Chapter 2. On Roche's route, one patrols the kingslayers' hideout. Another guards the armor of Ban Ard in the cave beneath the Kaedweni Camp. The earth elemental is the weaker of the two types of elemental in the game. Read the book *Beings of the Element of Earth* to gain knowledge of earth elementals.

Fire Elemental

Fire elementals share something of the stony appearance of earth elementals, but their bodies constantly glow and crackle with an aura of intense heat. Where earth elementals are stubborn servants at best, fire elementals are far more powerful and obedient to the mage that summons them. Since their behavior can be completely controlled by magic, fire elementals are often used as a mage's trump card. In war a mage can send a fire elemental out to scour the enemy, while a mage with treasures to protect can bind a fire elemental into magical locks to annihilate would-be thieves. You can encounter a fire elemental at the end of Chapter 2 on Roche's route, during the quest **The Siege of Vergen**. In Chapter 3 on Iorveth's route, you can encounter a fire elemental while resolving the quest The Spellbreaker. On both routes, you must battle a fire elemental in the course of finishing the quest **The Gargoyle Contract**. Read the book *Beings of the Element of Fire* to gain knowledge of fire elementals.

True Golem

True Golem	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Poison
	Incineration
	Knockdown
Vulnerabilities	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Elemental Stone
	Amethyst Dust
	Diamond Dust
Other Drops	Red Meteorite Ore
	Yellow Meteorite Ore
	Blue Meteorite Ore
	Golem Trophy

At first glance, a true golem can be easily confused with an earth elemental. It has a similar stony body, though the golem is often larger and has even greater strength. The golem is a purely synthetic being, crafted by a mage and animated through use of a secret name-word that only the mage knows. With the name-word, a golem can be deactivated. A wise mage will not divulge the name-word of his creation, and few golems are made intelligent enough to possess the power of speech at all. Crafting golems is a laborious, time-consuming practice that few modern mages can bring themselves to practice. It is far simpler to just summon an elemental, which led to the habit of calling such creatures golems.

You can encounter only one true golem in the game, during Chapter 3 on Iorveth's route while resolving the side quest **The Secrets of Loc Muinne**. This golem is the guardian of Dearhenna's study, so cunningly programmed that it can hold a perfectly intelligent conversation. The golem follows Dearhenna's program unswervingly, though, merely conversing with guests. It will not allow anyone into Dearhenna's study, and anyone trying hard to enter it is judged an intruder and destroyed with prejudice. This golem can summon two copies of itself to help eliminate intruders and attacks by swinging its great arms down at its assailants. It generally does not charge, instead fighting cautiously.

A true golem can generally be fought the same way you'd battle an earth or fire elemental—by using strong blows. You cannot use potions to prepare for a battle with it, if you end up fighting it, but oiling your blade with Falka's blood can help a little. Hitting it from behind helps you get past its potent defenses. A true golem's drops are similar to an elemental's drops, but the true golem is the only monster in the game that drops the potent golem trophy.

Gargoyles

Gargoyle	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Poison
	Incineration
	Knockdown
	Stun
Vulnerabilities	None
Alchemy Drops	Gargoyle Dust
	Gargoyle Heart
	Amethyst Dust
	Diamond Dust
	Elemental Stone
Other Drops	Gargoyle Trophy

The gargoyle was a sort of cheap, mass-produced golem. A mage still had to go to the effort of breathing life into a chunk of carved stone to make one, of course, but the enchantments to give it life were simpler and required only runes to keep them going. Most of the gargoyles created in the old days of high magic are now no more than statues, but the ones in Loc Muinne have long outlived their original masters. These gargoyles still guard their territories fiercely, though, and slowly regenerate even after they've apparently been destroyed.

You can encounter a pair of lone gargoyles in Chapter 2 on Roche's route, patrolling the kingslayers' hideout. In Chapter 3, gargoyles must be battled in the course of completing **The Gargoyle Contract**. You also encounter them patrolling Philippa Eilhart's house on Iorveth's route, while completing the main quest **The Spellbreaker**. If you choose to fight the Operator as part of the quest **From a Bygone Era**, you must contend with pairs of super-strong gargoyles that he summons periodically throughout the battle.

Gargoyles are the strongest of the enemies that attack in packs. They hit as hard (or harder) than many creatures twice their size, but are perhaps the most agile enemies in the game. Gargoyles have no true weaknesses and are highly resistant to damage. Despite their speed, strong attacks are best used against them so you can defeat them in fewer blows. Even when you bludgeon away a gargoyle's vitality, it still finds a way to attack you in death. Much like rotfiends, gargoyles explode when their vitality reaches zero. This explosion comes with less warning, does more damage, and inflicts incineration and knockdown if you're caught in it. You can read the book *Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters—Maintenance and Repair* to gain knowledge of gargoyles.

Gargoyles have two unique drops of note. Gargoyle dust in a standard game can be sold off, since it has no use in crafting and contains only vermilion, a common alchemical substance. In a Dark mode game, gargoyle dust is needed to craft the Kinslayer's boots, Kinslayer's gauntlets, and the steel sword Mourner. Gargoyle hearts can be used to craft elemental stones, but you usually have a steady supply of them by the time you begin fighting gargoyles regularly in Chapter 3. It can be more lucrative to simply sell them off.

Werewolves

Werewolf	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Poison
	Incineration
	Knockdown
	Stun
Vulnerabilities	None
Alchemy Drops	None
Other Drops	Werewolf Trophy

A werewolf is a once-ordinary man who suffers from the curse of lycanthropy. As a werewolf, he gains preternaturally sharp senses, incredible strength, and astounding vitality. Other men come to regard him as a monster and hunt the werewolf relentlessly, if he's not lucky enough to find some remote retreat where he can simply scare others away. It is possible to break the curse of lycanthropy, but so difficult that there are few records of attempts ever succeeding. More often than not, the werewolf meets his doom at the end of a witcher's silver sword.

You primarily encounter werewolves as a special opponent in the game's Arena mode. In the main game, there is only a single werewolf. In Chapter 3, on Roche's route, there is a cave infested by nekker warriors that you can investigate while escorting Brigida Papebrock to the riverbanks. If you visit the cave at night, you can find the werewolf lurking in one of the cave's most remote recesses.

As an attacker, the werewolf is very similar to the gargoyle. He has similar speed and can hit an opponent with repeated, powerful blows. The werewolf has, if anything, greater vitality than the werewolf. It takes strong equipment and high stats to put a werewolf down quickly or to resist its attacks. The werewolf has no real vulnerabilities to exploit otherwise. Use strong attacks against it to try to reduce its vitality quickly, or use light attacks to try to keep it perpetually stunned by your blows.

Werewolves do not drop any materials that can be used in alchemy or crafting. Their only drop is the werewolf trophy.

One of the most famous stories in the collection *The Last Wish* is "A Grain of Truth," which tells the tale of a werewolf named Nivellen.

Draugirs

Draugir	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Poison
	Knockdown
Vulnerabilities	Incineration
	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Draugir Claws
	Essence of Death
	Amethyst Dust
	Diamond Dust
Other Drops	Draugir Armor Fragment
	Red Meteorite Ore
	Yellow Meteorite Ore
	Blue Meteorite Ore
	Draugir Trophy

Draugirs are the servants of the draug. For this reason, although there are many draugirs, they can only be encountered in Chapter 2, before you've defeated the draug itself. Each draugir is the draug in miniature, a demon born from a damned soul and bound into a body made of cast-off armor, shields, swords, siege engines, and soldiers' corpses. The soul trapped in the draugir cannot rest so long as the draug exists, as it is instead compelled to carry out all of the draug's orders.

A draugir's fighting style is much like that of a human knight carrying a sword and heavy shield. You can fight them using a slow and cautious style, parrying its blows and then countering with skills like Riposte. Oiling your blade with specter oil can increase your damage. Occasionally the draugir charges you, which gives you a chance to dodge aside and then hit it from behind. Draugirs are slow enough that you can sometimes interrupt their blows with light attacks, too. They can also be stunned using a variety of methods, which can give you a chance to damage them. Read the book *Slaves of the Curse* to learn more about draugirs.

Draugirs have two unique drops, which must be acquired during Chapter 2. The draugir claw contains the alchemical substance rebis but otherwise can be simply sold off. The draugir armor fragment is worth only 1 oren, but in a Dark mode game it can be used to craft the Oathbreaker's armor.

Kayran

Kayran	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Poison
	Incineration
	Knockdown
Vulnerabilities	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Essence of Water
	Kayran Eyes
	Kayran Tissue
	Kayran Skin
Other Drops	Kayran Trophy

The kayran is a creature you face only once in the game. The kayran resembles nothing so much as an enormous octopus, but its tentacles are taloned and it has the ability to walk on land. It has lived in the waters near Flotsam for over a hundred years, growing larger and mutating over time. It is horrifically strong when you are hired to exterminate it in the game, blocking in the town, smashing boats, and shredding nets. When you face the kayran, it is sick and not long for the world anyway. Rather than a lingering, cancerous death, you give it the chance to leave the world fighting a battle for the ages.

You can only battle the kayran after luring it onto dry land. You must be careful to dodge the smashing blows delivered by its tentacles and to drink a Mongoose potion to protect you against the kayran's poison spray. Its only vulnerability is to being stunned through the Yrden sign, which can immobilize one of its tentacles just long enough for you to sever it. If you can survive long enough to sever many of the creature's tentacles, you might have the chance to finish it off with a well-placed bomb. Read the book *The Kayran—A Monograph* to learn more about the kayran.

The kayran drops three unique materials upon its death. Kayran eyes and kayran tissue cannot be used in crafting, but they contain the rare alchemical substance fulgur. Kayran skin has no alchemical value but can be used to craft the potent kayran carapace armor and kayran carapace reinforcements.

Draug

Draug	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Poison
	Knockdown
	Incineration
Vulnerabilities	Stun
Alchemy Drops	Draug Essence
	Essence of Death
	Amethyst Dust
	Diamond Dust
Other Drops	Draug Armor Fragment
	Red Meteorite Ore
	Yellow Meteorite Ore
	Blue Meteorite Ore
	Draug Trophy

The draug is a demon of fire and hatred. Much like the draugir, its body is animated by fire and formed of cast-off arms and shields. It is a lord of wraiths and commands countless draugirs and knight wraiths to do its bidding. The draug you face in Chapter 2 was once Vandergrift, also called "The Visitor," who commanded Henselt's forces at the Battle of Brenna. Unable to accept his defeat at Seltkirk's hands, Vandergrift's hateful spirit took advantage of the power of Sabrina Glevissig's blood curse to take on the form of a mighty draug. The draug seeks to fight and refight the Battle of Brenna forever, until it finally wins.

Defeating the draug requires first destroying its armor, then reducing its vitality. The draug takes damage from the blows of a silver sword, slowly but surely. You can accelerate the process by oiling your blade with specter oil. It is best to roll around the draug to attack it from behind, but this can be difficult. You can stun the draug using Aard or Yrden, giving yourself an opening to attack. The draug attacks with great sweeps of its sword and a powerful charge. It is best not to flee too far from it, or it will rain fireballs from its army's trebuchets and flaming arrows from its archers. Stay close to the draug and force it to focus all of its attention on fighting you. You can read the book *The Legendary Accursed* to learn more about the draug.

The draug has two unique drops, the draug armor fragment and the draug essence. Both are used only to craft the draug armor, which cannot be made until Chapter 3.

Dragon

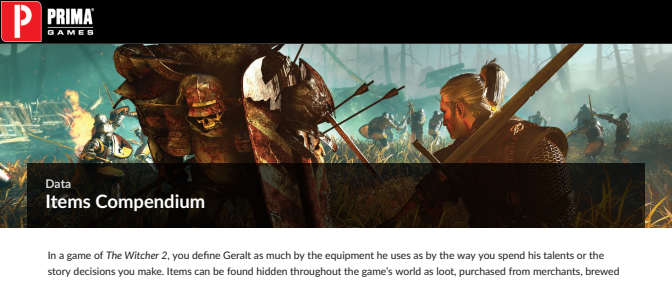
Dragon	
Resistances	Bleeding
	Poison
	Knockdown
	Incineration
	Stun
Vulnerabilities	None

Dragons are nearly extinct, but in their prime they were so awe-inspiring that many still fear them to this day, based on tales alone. Many similar but lesser creatures like dracolizards, flying drakes, forktails, slyzards, and wyverns are commonly mistaken for them. Dragons in their heyday were famed for their enormous appetites and their great hoards of treasure, which the creatures kept hidden in mountain lairs. Different dragon types could be identified by scales of different hues, including green, red, black, and white. In stories there are said to be gold dragons that can speak and change shapes, but it seems unlikely that such a creature ever existed.

Only a fool or a truly desperate person would dare to fight a dragon head on. Dragons have no weaknesses and must be fought with nerves and reflexes alone. Anyone facing a dragon should prepare by using the Quen sign or finding some other way to resist incineration. You must avoid the dragon's sweeping tail, slashing claws, and snapping teeth. Its hide is so tough that even the best silver sword can only hope to pierce the delicate skin along its face and neck. So yes, the only way to damage a dragon is to quite literally hurl yourself at its jaws. You must dodge away from a dragon quickly after striking it, or you will be punished. A wise (or perhaps cowardly) fighter might prefer to keep a safe distance and damage it by throwing silver daggers at its jaws.

You get no alchemy or crafting drops for slaying the dragon. Read the book *About Dragons* to learn more about them.

Dragons are frequently mentioned in passing in the *Witcher* books currently available in English, *The Last Wish* and *Blood of Elves*, but the most significant *Witcher* tales concerning dragons have yet to be translated.



Data

Items Compendium

In a game of *The Witcher 2*, you define Geralt as much by the equipment he uses as by the way you spend his talents or the story decisions you make. Items can be found hidden throughout the game's world as loot, purchased from merchants, brewed through alchemy, or crafted from diagrams. Some items can be found in a number of different ways, depending on what point in the game you're reached. You can also sell items freely back to merchants, though usually for little more than a handful of orens.

Note that not every item that appears in these lists can be obtained in a standard game. Items associated with the Blasphemer's, Oathbreaker's, and Kinslayer's sets can only be obtained when playing in Dark mode. Other items, particularly certain swords, can only be obtained and used as part of Arena mode. In addition, while playing a standard game, some items become unattainable as a result of your decision to side with Iorveth or Roche at the end of Chapter 1. Consult the walkthrough to see which items are available at given points in a standard game. Consult the Dark mode and Arena mode guides for more information on those aspects of the game.

All item statistics presented in these lists are default statistics. There are certain skills you can give Geralt that will affect the apparent statistics of an item, such as the alchemy tree skill Catalysis intensifying potion bonuses while weakening penalties. Swords with rune slots can have their effects and base damage altered by inserting runes in the slots. Likewise, armor with enhancement slots can have its effects and base armor value altered by enhancement pieces. If the numbers you see displayed onscreen in your game radically disagree with what is in the guide, check to see if you have some skill or enhancement active.

In the game's menu, items are separated into tabs. The "Items Compendium" chapter breaks items up in roughly the same way, though some categories are further broken down for the sake of clarity. For instance, in the game, all forms of armor are listed under the armor tab. In the guide, armor, boots, gauntlets, and trousers are listed separately so you can get a better idea of how a piece of gear compares to what else is available in that category. Likewise, the enhancements tab in the game lists all forms of enhancements, while the guide breaks this category into runes, armor enhancements, and oils. Finally, any item that contains an alchemical substance is listed in the alchemy category, while all other items used in crafting are listed in the crafting category.

Steel Swords

Steel swords are intended for use when fighting human and humanoid opponents in *The Witcher 2*. Elves, dwarves, and other witchers count as humanoids for the game's purposes. It is perfectly possible to fight monsters with a steel sword, but if you try you'll find you do dramatically less damage than you would with an equally good silver sword.

Some steel swords grant additional bonuses in addition to simply damaging enemies. A sword may help reduce damage when you block a blow, have a chance of inflicting critical effects, increase your vigor, or speed up vitality regeneration. Note that in cases where a sword grants a passive effect, like extra vitality, the effect only becomes active when the sword is drawn.

Steel Sword	Category	Damage	Rune Slots	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Orens	Weight
Aedirnian Light Sword	Common	16–26	1	Bleeding +10%				22	6
Aedirnian Red Sword	Common	19–28	1	Bleeding +10%				25	8
Aedirnian Short Sword	Common	17–25	1	Bleeding +15%				22	7
Angivare	Magical	24–30	3	Poison +10%	Stun +4%			31	9
Arbitrator	Magical	28–33	2	Bleeding +12–15%	Stun +4–5%			35	9
Ard'aenye	Common	7–15	1					12	5
Beann'shie	Magical	56–62	2	Freeze +25%	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +1			69	9
Black Unicorn	Common	32–45	1	Bleeding +20%	Vigor regeneration in combat +10%			41	5
Caerme	Magical	50–58	2	Vitality regeneration +2	Extends the duration of blade oils +4%	Chance of instant kill +4%		93	10
Ceremonial Ellandrian Sword	Common	48–55	1	Vigor +1	Chance of instant kill +2%			73	5
Ceremonial Sword of Deithwen	Common	36–45	1	Bleeding +25%				42	9
Cutlass	Magical	12–17	0	Bleeding +10%	Poison +8%			17	7
Dancer	Magical	55–62	2	Bleeding +30%	Vitality regeneration +2	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +1		80	10
Deireadh	Rare	25–32	3	Stun +8%	Poison +7%			37	8
Devil	Magical	52–56	2	Vigor +1	Stun +8%	Vigor regeneration during combat +10%	Damage bonus on signs +15	108	10
D'yaebl	Common	9–13	1	Chance of instant kill +1%				17	5
Elven Sword	Common	40–43	1	Bleeding +26–28%				43	5
Encrusted Nilfgaardian Lawgiver	Common	50–55	1	Damage reduction on block +75	Bleeding +35%			92	5
First-Rate Temerian Sword	Common	22–29	0	Vigor regeneration in combat +4				27	8
Forgotten Vran Sword	Epic	50–55	3	Freeze +20%	Vigor +1	Chance of instant kill +2%	Vitality regeneration +2	118	10
Gwalhir	Common	9–13	1					12	5
Gwyhyr	Rare	30–40	3	Vitality +20	Damage reduction on block +30	Bleeding +20%	Stun +8%	90	8
Harvall	Rare	44–50	3	Poison +20%				60	8
Jagged Blade	Magical	19–25	2	Bleeding +15%	Poison +10%			26	8
Kaedweni Black Sword	Common	30–33	2	Knockdown +6%	Bleeding +12–15%			33	9
Kaedweni Sword	Common	23–28	0	Damage reduction on block +6				30	8
Koviri Sword	Common	34–38	1	Vigor regeneration in combat +7%				37	8
Long Sword	Common	8–11	0	Damage reduction on block +3	Bleeding +10%			12	8
Mahakaman Rune Sihil	Magical	10–12	3	Chance of instant kill +2%				24	9
Mahakaman Sihil	Magical	29–35	3	Damage reduction on block +20	Knockdown +7%	Vitality regeneration with raised toxicity +50		48	9
Mourner	Common	52–60	1	Bleeding +40%	Chance of instant kill +3%			73	5
Nilfgaardian Harpy	Common	42–46	2	Damage reduction on block +50	Bleeding +15%			70	9
Nilfgaardian Sword	Common	40–44	1	Bleeding +15%				43	8
Novigradan Sword	Common	35–40	2	Damage reduction on block +50	Vigor regeneration in combat +10%			64	7
Philippa Eilhart's Dagger	Common	22–28	0	Bleeding +10%				0	5
Poisoned Zerrikanian Saberra	Magical	30–34	3	Poison +18–19%				36	7
Princess Xenthia's Sword	Common	31–35	1	Poison +10%	Bleeding +20%			35	5
Robust Cutlass	Common	14–21	1	Bleeding +10%	Poison +10%			19	7
Robust Kaedweni Sword	Common	25–31	1	Bleeding +7%				29	7
Robust Long Sword	Common	13–18	1	Damage reduction on block +10				22	8
Robust Short Sword	Common	12–15	0	Damage reduction on block +4				17	7
Robust Sword of Dol Blathanna	Magical	28–34	1	Poison +8%				35	6
Rusty Steel Sword	Common	6–10	0					9	6
Short Elven Sihil	Common	39–43	2	Bleeding +24–25%				43	5
Short Sword	Common	8–10	0					10	5
Special Forces Sword	Common	15–22	0	Bleeding +15%				20	8
Stennis' Sword	Common	22–29	0	Bleeding +15–17%				26	9
Superb Cutlass	Magical	16–22	2	Bleeding +10%	Poison +10%			22	8
Superb Long Sword	Common	14–20	2	Damage reduction on block +10	Vigor regeneration in combat +5%			23	9
Superb Short Sword	Common	10–14	1	Bleeding +10%				14	7
Sword of Caingorn	Common	13–17	0					16	9
Sword of Creyden	Common	10–13	1	Bleeding +8%				13	7
Sword of the Blue Mountains	Magical	8–10	1	Bleeding +7%				11	8
Sword of the Dun Banner	Magical	26–33	3	Damage reduction on block +20	Knockdown +10–13%			45	9
Temerian Sword	Common	11–14	0	Damage reduction on block +5				16	8
Ultimatum	Common	22–28	1	Bleeding +30%	Chance of instant kill +2%			37	5

Additional Weapons

Weapons from this curious category are primarily found as loot rather than crafted or purchased. Most occur as strictly random loot, though the Succubus's wand and Operator's staff are obtained only by defeating their namesakes. Additional weapons are equipped to Geralt's steel sword slot and are found in-game under the steel sword tab.

Although some additional weapons appear to have strong damage stats and effects, the only additional weapon that's really worth using instead of a steel sword is the Operator's staff. Some additional weapons, like the broom and scoop, are effectively gag items, primarily worth using so you can take screenshots of yourself using them to wallop enemies. Others are used in the Prologue, during sequences where you've lost access to your steel swords.

Note that certain additional weapons are described as being swords yet do not count as steel swords. If you equip these weapons, you'll notice that Geralt wears them belted at his side instead of strapped to his back. This is because swords in the additional weapons category are low-quality, common swords that aren't really on par with the weapons in the steel swords category.

Additional Weapons	Damage	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Orens	Weight
Axe	5–14				6	5
Bastard Sword	9–14	Bleeding +10%			7	7
Broom	4–7				4	5
Cleaver	12–17				8	5
Club	3–12	Knockdown +6–7%	Stun +13–19%		5	6
Dwarven Axe	10–20	Bleeding +10–19%			9	6
Dwarven Hammer	7–20	Stun +12–15%			8	6
Elven Messer	12–14	Bleeding +10–20%			8	6
Elven Sword	13–15	Bleeding +11–20%			8	5
Espadon	19–24	Bleeding +10%			12	12
Falchion	12–16	Bleeding +6%			8	5
Guisarme	12–16	Knockdown +7%	Stun +10%		8	14
Hammer	5–7	Stun +5%			4	2
Hatchet	8–10				6	5
Karabela	12–16				8	6
Long Sword	10–13	Bleeding +14–20%			7	6
Operator's Staff	40–60	Incineration +80%	Freeze +10%	Stun +4%	0	10
Paling	5–9				4	4
Pickaxe	14–22				9	6
Rake	10–14	Knockdown +7%	Stun +7%		7	10
Rusty Dagger	5–8	Bleeding +3%			4	2
Sabre	12–16	Bleeding +10%			8	6
Scoop	1–5				3	4
Shovel	10–14	Knockdown +7%	Stun +7%		7	10
Small Blackjack	5–10	Stun +10–19%			5	3
Succubus' Wand	14–20	Incineration +10%			10	8
Sword	10–13				6	8

Silver Swords

Silver swords are intended for use when fighting monsters in *The Witcher 2*. In fact, you can effectively define the term monster as "anything that takes full damage from a silver sword." If you are fighting something that isn't an elf, dwarf, human, or rival witcher, you should be fighting it with your silver sword in hand. You can attempt to fight humans and humanoids with a silver sword, but you'll find you do dramatically less damage than you would with an equally good steel sword.

Some silver swords grant additional bonuses besides simply damaging enemies. A sword may help reduce damage when you block a blow, increase the power of your signs, help regenerate vigor, or any number of other things. Note that in cases where a sword grants a passive effect, like extra vitality, the effect only becomes active when the sword is drawn.

You may also notice that certain swords grant damage bonuses against certain classes of monsters. Usually, these bonuses affect a single species and are relatively self-explanatory. Some of them aren't so obvious:

- All types of endregas and arachasae count as insectoids.
- Anything larger than Geralt counts as a large monster. This includes arachasae, endrega queens, bullvores, elementals, the true golem, the kayran, the draug, and the dragon.

Silver Sword	Category	Damage	Rune Slots	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Effect 5	Effect 6	Effect 7	Effect 8	Effect 9	
Aedan Deith	Epic	45–50	3	Bleeding +30%	Damage dealt to wraiths +4%	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +2	Chance of instant kill +2%						49
Aerondight	Magical	11–18	3	Bleeding +5%									57
Anathema	Common	20–25	0	Bleeding +15%	Chance of instant kill +1%								29
Blood Sword	Epic	32–36	3	Bleeding +10–55%									54
Blue Meteorite Sword	Magical	17–25	1	Damage bonus on signs +5									38
Bride	Magical	35–42	2	Damage reduction on block +33	Damage dealt to wraiths +30%	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +2							67
Deithwen	Rare	44–48	3	Damage dealt to large monsters +25%	Damage dealt to gargoyles +25%								59
Eclipse	Magical	33–43	2	Stun +15%	Vigor regeneration during combat +20%	Damage bonus on signs +12							78
Fate	Magical	20–26	1	Poison +10%									26
The Good Shepherd	Magical	35–40	2	Bleeding +20%	Vigor regeneration during combat +30%	Damage dealt to harpies +30%							44
Gynvael Aedd	Rare	43–45	3	Bleeding +25%	Damage dealt to insectoids +4%	Damage dealt to necrophages +4%							57
Harpy	Magical	15–29	3	Bleeding +11–52%	Damage dealt to harpies +11–52%								26
Ichaer Aardanne	Rare	31–55	2	Vigor +1	Damage reduction on block +30	Vigor regeneration during combat +60%	Damage dealt to harpies +12%	Damage dealt to gargoyles +12%	Damage bonus on signs +15				72
Moon Blade	Magical	14–22	3	Bleeding +25%	Damage bonus on signs +5								35
Marag Balor	Rare	50–58	3	Vitality +50	Bleeding +40%	Vitality regeneration +0.35	Damage dealt to gargoyles +10%	Damage dealt to necrophages +10%	Damage dealt to large monsters +10%				68
Naevde Seidhe	Rare	30–34	3	Bleeding +10%	Damage dealt to wraiths +15%								42
Negotiator	Magical	19–25	2	Vitality +30	Freeze +20%	Bleeding +20%							40
Red Meteorite Sword	Magical	18–24	1	Chance of instant kill +1%									30
Robust Blue Meteorite Sword	Magical	29–33	2	Damage bonus on signs +7									34
Robust Red Meteorite Sword	Magical	30–32	2	Chance of instant kill +1%									41
Robust Witcher's Silver Sword	Common	12–18	0	Bleeding +6%									16
Robust Yellow Meteorite Sword	Magical	29–33	2	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +2									41
Silver-Plated Sword	Common	8–16	0	Bleeding +4%									13
Superb Blue Meteorite Sword	Magical	38–44	3	Damage dealt to insectoids +2%	Damage dealt to necrophages +2%	Damage dealt to large monsters +2%	Damage dealt to wraiths +2%	Damage dealt to gargoyles +2%	Damage bonus on signs +10				74
Superb Red Meteorite Sword	Magical	38–44	3	Damage dealt to insectoids +2%	Damage dealt to necrophages +2%	Damage dealt to large monsters +2%	Damage dealt to wraiths +2%	Damage dealt to gargoyles +2%	Chance of instant kill +2%				57
Superb Witcher's Silver Sword	Common	17–25	1	Bleeding +12%	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +1								25
Superb Yellow Meteorite Sword	Magical	38–44	3	Damage dealt to insectoids +2%	Damage dealt to necrophages +2%	Damage dealt to large monsters +2%	Damage dealt to wraiths +2%	Damage dealt to gargoyles +2%	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +2				26
Sword of Kaer Morhen	Rare	15–24	1	Bleeding +7%	Chance of instant kill +1%								32
Virgin	Common	35–45	0	Poison +20%	Chance of instant kill +2%								51
Weeper	Common	50–55	0	Poison +30%	Chance of instant kill +3%								69
Wight	Rare	52–57	2	Damage reduction on block +20	Stun +7%	Damage dealt to gargoyles +10%	Damage dealt to large monsters +15%	Extends the duration of blade oils +1%	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +1				45
Witcher's Silver Sword	Magical	10–17	0	Bleeding +5%									15
Yellow Meteorite Sword	Magical	17–25	1	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +1									27
Zerrikanterment	Rare	44–49	2	Bleeding +35%	Damage dealt to insectoids +4%	Damage dealt to necrophages +4%	Damage dealt to large monsters +4%	Damage dealt to wraiths +4%	Damage dealt to gargoyles +4%	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +1	Chance of instant kill +1%	Damage bonus on signs +10	54

Armor

Armor protects the arms and torso. Most of the garments described as "armor" in *The Witcher 2* are actually layered garments that can combine padding, worked leather, chain mail shirts, and even ring mail. A witcher like Geralt must be able to move swiftly.

Armor is perhaps the single most important piece of Geralt's equipment. Armor can increase Geralt's maximum load, protect against critical effects, accelerate vitality regeneration, and offer a number of far stranger, unique bonuses. Strong sets of armor are usually difficult to obtain in one way or another, whether hard to find, expensive, or only craftable through use of rare ingredients.

Armor	Category	Value	Slots	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Effect 5	Effect 6	Effect 7	Orens	Weight
Aedirnian Leather Jacket	Magical	+14	1	Resistance to incineration +20–30%	Resistance to bleeding +20–30%	Resistance to poison +20–30%					42	18
Armor of Ban Ard	Magical	+16	2	Reduction of damage from magic +2%	Resistance to incineration +26%	Resistance to bleeding +26%	Resistance to poisoning +26%	Vitality +40			91	20
Armor of Loc Muinne	Epic	+18	3	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Resistance to incineration +20–30%	Resistance to bleeding +20–30%	Resistance to poisoning +20–30%	Vigor regeneration in combat +10%			72	22
Armor of Tir Na Lia	Rare	+23	3	Vitality +40	Reduction of damage from magic +15%	Resistance to incineration +50%	Resistance to bleeding +50%	Resistance to poisoning +50%	Vigor regeneration in combat +12–14%		129	21
Armor of Vicovaro	Rare	+24	2	Reduction of damage from magic +30–50%	Resistance to incineration +50%	Resistance to bleeding +50%	Resistance to poisoning +50%	Geralt's maximum load +45			138	20
Armor of Ys	Epic	+24	3	Vitality +30	Reduction of damage from magic +20%	Resistance to incineration +60%	Resistance to bleeding +60%	Resistance to poisoning +60%			144	21
Armor of Ysgith	Epic	+26	3	Vigor +1	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Resistance to incineration +60%	Resistance to bleeding +60%	Resistance to poisoning +60%	Damage bonus on signs +8	Vigor regeneration in combat +15%	145	20
Astrogarus' Armor	Rare	+7	1	Vitality +30	Reduction of damage from magic +2%	Resistance to bleeding +13%	Resistance to poisoning +13%				61	18
Blasphemer's Armor	Magical	+15	3	Vitality +40	Reduction of damage from magic +22%	Resistance to incineration +85%	Resistance to bleeding +30%	Resistance to poisoning +30%	Damage bonus on signs +5		143	22
Blue Stripes Combat Jacket	Epic	+5	3	Vitality +5	Resistance to incineration +10%	Resistance to bleeding +10%	Resistance to poisoning +10%	Damage reduction on block +10	Bleeding +10%		37	20
Deerg Ruadhri	Rare	+22	3	Vitality +30	Reduction of damage from magic +15%	Resistance to incineration +30%	Resistance to bleeding +30%	Resistance to poisoning +30%	Damage bonus on signs +5		126	20
Dragon Scale Armor	Epic	+17	3	Vitality +50	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Resistance to incineration +40–50%	Resistance to bleeding +40–50%	Resistance to poisoning +40–50%	Trap damage multiplier +50%		146	22
Draug Armor	Epic	+25	3	Vitality +50	Reduction of damage from magic +15%	Resistance to incineration +50%	Resistance to bleeding +50%	Resistance to poisoning +50%	Damage bonus on signs +6		199	22
Elven Armor	Magical	+8	1	Resistance to bleeding +20–30%	Resistance to poisoning +20–30%	Geralt's maximum load +15					41	12
Hardened Leather Jacket	Common	+7	1	Resistance to incineration +12%	Resistance to poisoning +12%	Resistance to bleeding +12%					20	16
Heavy Elven Armor	Magical	+8	2	Resistance to bleeding +10–20%	Resistance to poisoning +10–20%	Geralt's maximum load +20					46	20
Heavy Leather Jacket	Common	+6	0	Resistance to poisoning +10%	Resistance to incineration +10%	Resistance to bleeding +10%					17	16
Hunter's Armor	Rare	+10	3	Reduction of damage from magic +2%	Resistance to incineration +30%	Resistance to bleeding +30%	Resistance to poisoning +30%				36	20
Kaedweni Leather Armor	Magical	+11	2	Resistance to incineration +21–30%	Resistance to bleeding +21–30%	Resistance to poisoning +21–30%					45	19
Kaedweni Leather Jacket	Magical	+13	0	Resistance to incineration +15–25%	Resistance to bleeding +15–25%	Resistance to poisoning +15–25%					39	18
Kayran Carapace Armor	Epic	+9	3	Vitality +30	Reduction of damage from magic +5%	Resistance to incineration +30%	Resistance to bleeding +30%	Resistance to poisoning +30%			84	22
Kinslayer's Armor	Magical	+40	3	Reduction of damage from magic +40%	Resistance to incineration +70%	Resistance to bleeding +70%	Resistance to poisoning +70%	Vitality regeneration +2	Damage bonus on signs +10		363	22
Leather Jacket	Common	+3	0	Resistance to poisoning +10–15%	Resistance to bleeding +10–15%						9	16
Leather Jacket	Magical	+9	2	Resistance to incineration +20–30%	Resistance to bleeding +30–40%	Resistance to poison +20–30%					28	18
Light Leather Armor	Magical	+7	0	Resistance to bleeding +16%	Resistance to poisoning +16%	Vigor regeneration during combat +5%					21	17
Light Leather Jacket	Common	+3	0	Resistance to bleeding +6–8%							9	16
Oathbreaker's Armor	Magical	+30	3	Reduction of damage from magic +20%	Resistance to incineration +50%	Resistance to bleeding +50%	Resistance to poisoning +50%	Damage bonus on signs +8	Geralt's maximum load +50		315	22
Quilted Armor	Common	+12	0	Resistance to bleeding +20%	Resistance to poisoning +20%						32	20
Quilted Leather	Magical	+4	0	Resistance to bleeding +7%							12	17
Robust Leather Jacket	Magical	+7	0	Resistance to bleeding +20–30%	Resistance to poisoning +20–30%						22	18
Seltkirk's Armor	Magical	+14	2	Resistance to incineration +20–30%	Resistance to bleeding +20–30%	Resistance to poisoning +20–30%					0	0
Shaelhal's Armor	Rare	+8	2	Resistance to bleeding +14%	Resistance to poisoning +14%	Damage bonus on signs +4					39	16
Studded Leather Jacket	Magical	+4	0	Resistance to bleeding +6%	Resistance to poisoning +6%						12	16
Temerian Armor	Magical	+5	0	Resistance to incineration +5–10%	Resistance to bleeding +5–10%	Resistance to poisoning +5–10%					15	16
Thyssen's Armor	Magical	+15	2	Reduction of damage from magic +2%	Resistance to incineration +20–30%	Resistance to bleeding +20–30%	Resistance to poisoning +20–30%	Bomb damage multiplier +50%			45	21
Vran Armor	Epic	+30	3	Reduction of damage from magic +20%	Resistance to incineration +70%	Resistance to bleeding +70%	Resistance to poisoning +70%	Vitality regeneration +2			198	22
Zireael's Armor	Epic	+17	3	Reduction of damage from magic +11%	Resistance to incineration +30–40%	Resistance to bleeding +30–40%	Resistance to poisoning +30–40%	Damage bonus on signs +7%			141	21

Trousers

Don't underestimate the value of a decent pair of pants. Trousers typically serve a complementary role in Geralt's gear, boosting his resistance to key critical effects or giving him some extra vitality. Only the mage's trousers offer any sort of rare or unusual bonus.

Trousers	Category	Value	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Effect 5	Orens	Weight
Blasphemer's Trousers	Magical	+2	Vitality +5					21	5
Elder Blood Trousers	Common	+3	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Resistance to incineration +30%	Resistance to bleeding +30%			50	5
Heavy Leather Trousers	Common	+1	Resistance to incineration +6%	Resistance to poisoning +6%	Resistance to bleeding +6%	Resistance to incineration +6%		7	6
Heavy Leather Trousers	Common	+1	Resistance to incineration +7%	Resistance to bleeding +7%	Resistance to poisoning +7%			11	5
Kaedweni Galligaskins	Common	+1	Resistance to bleeding +20%					13	7
Kinslayer's Trousers	Magical	+4	Vitality +25					71	5
Mage's Trousers	Common	+1	Resistance to incineration +10%	Resistance to bleeding +20%	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Heliotrope sign duration +5	Damage bonus on signs +2	9	2
Nilfgaardian Leather Galligaskins	Common	+1	Resistance to bleeding +20%					15	6
Oathbreaker's Trousers	Magical	+3	Vitality +15					46	5
Robust Leather Trousers	Common	+1	Resistance to incineration +7%					6	6
Robust Studded Leather Trousers	Common	+1	Resistance to bleeding +20%					7	6
Studded Leather Trousers	Common	+1	Resistance to incineration +5%	Resistance to bleeding +5%				7	5
Superb Heavy Leather Trousers	Common	+2	Resistance to incineration +6%	Resistance to bleeding +6%	Resistance to poisoning +6%			16	5
Superb Leather Trousers	Common	+1	Resistance to incineration +5%	Resistance to poisoning +5%	Resistance to bleeding +5%			9	5
Superb Nilfgaardian Leather Trousers	Common	+2	Resistance to incineration +20%	Resistance to bleeding +30%				20	6
Superb Studded Leather Trousers	Common	+1	Resistance to incineration +8%	Resistance to bleeding +8%	Resistance to poisoning +8%			15	6
Superb Temerian Leather Breeches	Common	+2	Resistance to incineration +20%	Resistance to bleeding +30%				18	6
Temerian Leather Galligaskins	Common	+1	Resistance to bleeding +20%					11	6
Trousers	Common	+0	Resistance to incineration +5%					1	4

Boots

Boots also serve a complementary role in Geralt's gear. Most boots increase Geralt's total armor value slightly and also increase his resistance to damage from magic. A good pair of boots can go a long way when battling a mage.

Boots	Category	Value	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Orens	Weight
Blasphemer's Boots	Magical	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +5%	Resistance to bleeding +5%			6	2
Elder Blood Boots	Magical	+3	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Resistance to incineration +2%	Resistance to bleeding +2%	Resistance to poisoning +2%	40	3
Hardened Leather Boots	Magical	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +2%	Resistance to incineration +1%			13	3
Kaedweni Jackboots	Epic	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +3%	Resistance to incineration +2%	Resistance to bleeding +2%		27	3
Kinslayer's Boots	Magical	+3	Reduction of damage from magic +15%	Resistance to bleeding +15%			17	2
Nilfgaardian Jackboots	Epic	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +4%	Resistance to incineration +2%	Resistance to bleeding +2%		30	3
Oathbreaker's Boots	Magical	+2	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Resistance to bleeding +10%			12	2
Reinforced Boots	Common	+0	Reduction of damage from magic +1%	Resistance to incineration +1%	Resistance to bleeding +1%		4	2
Soaked Boots	Common	+0					1	2
Squire's Boots	Common	+0	Resistance to incineration +1%				0	2
Superb Kaedweni Jackboots	Magical	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +4%	Resistance to incineration +2%	Resistance to bleeding +2%	Resistance to poisoning +2%	33	2
Superb Nilfgaardian Leather Boots	Magical	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +5%	Resistance to incineration +2%	Resistance to bleeding +2%	Resistance to poisoning +2%	34	2
Superb Temerian Jackboots	Magical	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +4%	Resistance to incineration +2%	Resistance to bleeding +2%	Resistance to poisoning +2%	29	2
Temerian Jackboots	Epic	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +3%	Resistance to incineration +2%	Resistance to bleeding +2%		21	3
Worn Hardened Leather Boots	Common	+1					10	3
Worn Leather Boots	Common	+0	Resistance to incineration +1%				3	2

Gauntlets

Gauntlets also boost Geralt's resistance to magic and certain basic critical effects. Unlike boots, though, gauntlets sometimes carry more exotic bonuses like maximum load increases, bomb damage multipliers, or trap damage multipliers. A particular set of gauntlets can be a strong complement to a particular play style.

Gauntlets	Category	Value	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Effect 5	Orens	Weight
Blasphemer's Gauntlets	Magical	+2	Resistance to poisoning +10%	Geralt's maximum load +15				59	1
Elder Blood Gauntlets	Magical	+2	Reduction of damage from magic +15%	Resistance to bleeding +8%	Resistance to incineration +8%	Geralt's maximum load +5	Thrown dagger damage +5	46	2
Elven Gauntlet	Epic	+2	Reduction of damage from magic +5%	Resistance to bleeding +8%	Resistance to incineration +8%	Geralt's maximum load +5	Thrown dagger damage +4	47	0.5
Herbalist's Gloves	Epic	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Extends the duration of blade oils +20%	Number of additional alchemy ingredients +1			5	0.5
Kaedweni Falconer's Gauntlets	Magical	+2	Reduction of damage from magic +5%	Resistance to bleeding +8%	Resistance to incineration +8%	Geralt's maximum load +5	Trap damage multiplier +20%	24	2
Kinslayer's Gauntlets	Magical	+4	Resistance to poisoning +20%	Geralt's maximum load +25				98	1
Long Leather Gauntlets	Common	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +4%	Resistance to bleeding +7%				8	0.5
Long, Robust Gauntlets	Rare	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +4%	Resistance to bleeding +7%	Resistance to incineration +7%	Geralt's maximum load +5		28	1
Long Studded Leather Gauntlets	Magical	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +7%	Resistance to bleeding +8%	Resistance to incineration +8%	Geralt's maximum load +5		27	1
Mage's Gloves	Epic	+0	Reduction of damage from magic +10%	Damage bonus on signs +5				39	0.5
Nilfgaardian Falconer's Gauntlets	Magical	+2	Reduction of damage from magic +1%	Resistance to bleeding +8%	Resistance to incineration +8%			13	2
Oathbreaker's Gauntlets	Magical	+3	Resistance to poisoning +15%	Geralt's maximum load +20				78	1
Short Gauntlets	Common	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +2%	Resistance to bleeding +7%				6	0.5
Short Studded Gauntlets	Magical	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +6%	Resistance to bleeding +8%	Thrown dagger damage +2			7	0.5
Temerian Falconer's Gauntlets	Magical	+2	Reduction of damage from magic +5%	Resistance to bleeding +8%	Resistance to incineration +8%	Bomb damage multiplier +20%		13	2
Worn Leather Gauntlets	Common	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +1%	Resistance to bleeding +5%				6	0.5
Worn Long Leather Gauntlets	Common	+1	Reduction of damage from magic +3%					6	0.5

Ranged Weapons

To use ranged weapons, you must put at least one talent into the Throwing Daggers skill. Most types of thrown daggers cannot be crafted, instead needing to be looted or purchased. Silver thrown daggers damage monsters like a silver sword, while other thrown daggers are assumed to be made of steel. Ranged weapons are one of *The Witcher 2*'s many situational weapons. That is, when used in the right situations, thrown daggers can single-handedly turn the tide of battle in your favor. In the wrong situation, a ranged weapon is basically useless.

So what's the right situation? Well, there are two where using a ranged weapon is a good idea. One is when fighting combat mages. Thrown daggers fly quickly through the air and, used correctly, can interrupt a mage's spellcasting animations. You can also make good use of thrown daggers when fighting slow, individual opponents like elementals. Avoid using ranged weapons when you're fighting extremely agile enemies or when you're fighting groups enemies.

Ranged Weapon	Type	Damage	Effect 1	Effect 2	Orens	Weight
Poisoned Harpy Claw	Common	40–50	Poison +90%		6	0.5
Robust Well-Balanced Dagger	Common	40–60			3	0.5
Robust Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	Common	50–70			3	0.5
Rusty Well-Balanced Dagger	Common	20–30			2	0.5
Sting	Common	40–50	Freeze +50%	Bonus damage when poisoned +30%	6	0.5
Superb Well-Balanced Dagger	Common	50–70			4	0.5
Superb Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	Common	50–70			5	0.5
Well-Balanced Dagger	Common	30–40			3	0.5
Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	Common	50–70			3	0.5

Oils

Oils can be applied to a witcher's steel or silver blade to grant a temporary bonus. Typically, oils either increase critical effects or increase damage dealt against a specific type of enemy while the effect lasts. You can oil your blade from the inventory menu, so you can apply a bonus during the middle of a fight if you suddenly decide you need it. Oils can be prepared from alchemical formulas if the right substances are on hand. This is by far the most economical way to create and use them.

Oils	Effect 1	Duration	Orens	Weight
Arachid Oil	Poison +30%	5	6	0.2
Brown Oil	Bleeding +30%	5	6	0.2
Falka's Blood	Damage +10%	3	6	0.2
Hanged Man's Venom	Damage dealt to humans +20%	5	6	0.2
Insectoid Oil	Damage dealt to insectoids +20%	5	6	0.2
Necrophage Oil	Damage dealt to necrophages +20%	5	6	0.2
Specter Oil	Damage dealt to wraiths +20%	5	6	0.2
Whetstone	Damage +20%	20	51	1
Whirl	Damage +5%	5	6	0.2

Runes

Runes can be slotted into a steel or silver sword to permanently enhance its effects. You cannot remove a rune once it is slotted into a sword, so this is not a decision you should make lightly. Runes can be crafted from diagrams or purchased from merchants. Generally, it is much cheaper to craft runes than to buy them, but this can be difficult early in the game.

Keep your build in mind when slotting runes. A mage gets the most mileage out of moon runes, while alchemists can benefit from the extra vitality granted by earth runes. Fire runes and Ysgith runes are useful to virtually all builds.

Runes	Type	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Orens	Weight
Earth Rune	Rare	Vitality +25	Damage reduction on block +5%		11	0.2
Fire Rune	Rare	Damage +5%	Resistance to incineration +20%	Incineration +10%	21	0.2
Moon Rune	Rare	Damage bonus on signs +4			16	0.2
Sun Rune	Rare	Damage +5%			16	0.2
Ysgith Rune	Rare	Bleeding +8%			21	0.2

Armor Enhancements

Armor enhancements are the equivalent of runes for armor. If a piece of armor has sockets, you can place enhancements in them to increase its armor value and give it other special abilities. Generally, the special abilities granted by armor enhancements are relatively weak, although you can add significant boosts to sign strength onto armor through enhancements.

Unless you're playing a mage build that relies heavily on signs, it's best to slot armor with enhancements that give the biggest bonuses possible. Some enhancements can be crafted from diagrams, but the most powerful enhancements generally must be found and looted.

Enhancement	Type	Value	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Orens	Weight
Aedirnian Special Forces Cockade	Epic	+2				5	0.1
Amethyst Armor Enhancement	Magical	+1	Vitality +5			5	0.2
Armor Enhancement	Common	+1				2	0.2
Dhu Bleidd	Rare	+1	Damage bonus on signs +5			10	0.2
Diamond Armor Reinforcements	Magical	+2	Vitality +10			9	0.2
Dwarven Enhancement	Magical	+2				9	0.2
Elaine Bleidd	Rare	+1	Vitality +10			12	0.2
Elven Enhancements	Magical	+1	Damage bonus on signs +4	Resistance to poisoning +2%		10	0.2
Endrega Hide Reinforcements	Magical	+1	Resistance to poisoning +2%			3	0.2
Fibre Enhancer	Common	+1	Resistance to bleeding +1%			2	0.2
Hardened Leather Reinforcement	Common	+0	Resistance to bleeding +1%	Resistance to incineration +1%		2	0.2
Kayran Carapace Reinforcement	Epic	+1	Resistance to poisoning +5%	Resistance to bleeding +5%	Vigor regeneration during combat +5%	3	0.5
Leather Enhancement	Common	+1	Resistance to incineration +1%			2	0.2
Magic Wrap	Epic	+2	Damage bonus on signs +3			10	0.2
Mail Enhancement	Common	+1	Vitality +10	Resistance to bleeding +1%		7	0.2
Reinforced Leather Enhancement	Common	+1	Resistance to bleeding +2%	Resistance to incineration +2%		2	0.2
Robust Leather Reinforcement	Common	+1	Resistance to poisoning +1%	Resistance to bleeding +1%	Resistance to incineration +1%	2	0.2
Runic Armor Enhancement	Magical	+1	Damage bonus on signs +2			5	0.2
Steel Plate Enhancement	Common	+2	Resistance to incineration +1%	Resistance to bleeding +1%	Resistance to poisoning +1%	4	0.2
Studded Leather Reinforcement	Common	+2				4	0.2
Temerian Special Forces' Cockade	Epic	+2				5	0.1
Vran Armor Enhancement	Epic	+1	Vitality +15	Resistance to bleeding +5%		14	0.5

Potions

A witcher can drink potions to temporarily alter stats. Some potions offer mild boosts with no drawbacks, while others dramatically boost a handful of stats and significantly reduce others. You can get the most benefit out of these potions by drinking them in combination with others that cancel out the drawbacks. At default, Geralt can drink up to three potions. He can tolerate up to 100 points of toxicity before he becomes poisoned.

While you can occasionally purchase potions from merchants, it is much more economical to brew potions from formulas. Most potions require alchemical substances, which are obtained from commonplace ingredients like herbs and common monster drops. Only a handful of high-end potions, like Tawny Owl, require any sort of rare alchemical substance, such as fulgur.

Potion Combinations

Certain potions are designed to be used in conjunction with other potions. This is particularly true of potions that offer powerful bonuses alongside stiff penalties. In these cases, you use a second potion to ameliorate or eliminate the stat penalties. These potion combinations are recommended and work particularly well together:

- Brock and Golden Oriole
- Cat and Rook
- Gadwall, Rook, and Tawny Owl
- Lapwing, Golden Oriole, and Swallow
- Maribor Forest, Wolf, and Swallow
- Stammelford's Philtre and Swallow
- Thunderbolt and Swallow
- Virga and Wolf
- White Raffard's Decoction and Rook

Potion	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Effect 5	Effect 6	Effect 7	Duration	Toxicity	Orens	Weight
Anabolic Steroids	Allows the user to defeat the Mighty Nome							2	50	11	0.2
Brock	Resistance to incineration -50%	Resistance to bleeding -50%	Resistance to poisoning -50%	Incineration +15%	Bleeding +15%	Poison +15%		50	50	2	0.2
Cat	Damage -10%	Allows Geralt to see in the dark and through walls						5	25	2	0.2
Gadwall	Damage -40%	Vitality regeneration during combat +2	Vitality regeneration +3	Stamina -1				50	40	2	0.2
Golden Oriole	Resistance to poison +50%	Resistance to incineration +50%	Resistance to bleeding +50%					50	50	2	0.2
Healing Brew	Vitality regeneration +1							50	26	0	0.2
Lapwing	Vitality -30%	Resistance to incineration -30%	Resistance to bleeding -30%	Vigor regeneration during combat +50%	Vigor regeneration +50%			50	40	2	0.2
Maribor Forest	Vitality -30%	Vigor +1	Incineration -25%	Bleeding -25%	Poison -25%			50	40	2	0.2
Mongoose	Resistance to poisoning +20.000%							50	25	11	0.2
Petri's Philtre	Damage bonus on signs +7							50	50	2	0.2
Rook	Damage +10%							50	25	2	0.2
Stammelford's Philtre	Vitality -50%	Sign intensity +1						50	30	2	0.2
Swallow	Vitality regeneration during combat +1	Vitality regeneration +1						50	25	2	0.2
Tawny Owl	Vigor regeneration in combat +20%	Vigor regeneration +20%						50	25	2	0.2
Thunderbolt	Damage +20%	Vitality -50%	Vitality regeneration during combat -50%	Vitality regeneration -50%				50	50	2	0.2
Tiara	Armor +10%	Vitality -50	Vigor loss when blocking -50%					50	40	2	0.2
Virga	Armor +20%	Resistance to poisoning +75%	Resistance to incineration +75%	Resistance to bleeding +75%	Incineration -25%	Bleeding -25%	Poison -25%	50	30	2	0.2
Visionary's Potion	Vigor regeneration in combat +25%	Vitality regeneration in combat +1	Vitality regeneration +2					5	50	11	0.2
White Raffard's Decoction	Damage -30%	Vitality +50%						50	50	2	0.2
Wolf	Incineration +15%	Bleeding +15%	Poison +15%	Chance of incineration with Igni +32%	Axii critical effect chance +15%			50	25	2	0.2

Traps

Traps are a way for a witcher to passively inflict damage and critical effects on a monster or other enemy. When the enemy steps into the trap's area of effect, the trap is triggered. The enemy immediately suffers damage and has a chance of suffering whatever critical effects the trap inflicts. Some traps can trigger spell-like effects. Enemies who step on a fury trap become affected as if by the witcher's sign Axii, for example.

Traps can be purchased, but this is prohibitively expensive. It is generally cheaper to purchase a diagram for a given kind of trap, then pay a craftsman to make traps for you. If you place a trap and an enemy does not trigger it, you can pick it up and use it again. Otherwise, traps can be used only once each and then become junk. The only exception to this is the snare, which can be reused an unlimited number of times and can only be looted from certain areas in the game.

Note that a witcher can use the Talgar winter trap to inflict the rare critical effect Freeze on enemies. There are no witcher's signs or bombs that can inflict Freeze, and only a handful of swords and one ranged weapon that can do so. This makes the Talgar winter trap extremely useful to virtually all Geralt builds. Few enemies resist freezing and no enemies are completely immune to it.

Trap	Source	Damage	Effect 1	Orens	Weight
Biter	Diagram	10–30		3	1
Clawer	Diagram	30–55	Bleeding +50%	3	1
Conflagration	Diagram	20–50	Incineration +50%	4	1
Fury	Diagram	1–5	Causes foes to attack each other (like Axii)	3	1
Harpy Trap	Diagram	0	Used to destroy harpy nests	6	1
Kayran Trap	Diagram	0	Severs a kayran's tentacle	0	1
Snare	Loot	30–50	Bleeding +50%	2	1
Talgar Winter	Diagram	20–30	Freeze +50%	4	1

Bombs

A witcher's bomb is very much like a magical grenade, able to deal damage and inflict critical effects on all enemies caught within its area of effect. While a trap can have similar effects, a trap is most effective if it's set up before a battle even begins. A bomb can be quickly thrown at a group of onrushing enemies and is less likely to be interrupted by an enemy's attack.

Bombs are made from formulas, so you can make a new batch of them from alchemical reagents wherever it's safe to meditate. Bombs can inflict a wide range of effects on enemies, ranging from pure damage to incineration and stun. Bombs that inflict damage and critical effects are at their most potent in the hands of an alchemist, who can spend talents to get bonuses to a bomb's effectiveness.

There's also a family of bombs that have no real effect on their own but become powerful when coupled with another ability. Red haze makes Axii take effect more quickly, while dragon's dream creates a cloud of gas that can be ignited by Igni. These are obviously very useful in the hands of mage builds. Swordsman builds get the stenchbulb, which increases the enemy's vulnerability to critical effects.

Bomb	Damage	Effect 1	Orens	Weight
Dancing Star	10–40	Incineration +30%	6	0.5
Devil's Puffball	15–30	Poison +50%	6	0.5
Dragon's Dream	None.	Releases a cloud of flammable gas (ignites with Igni)	5	0.5
Flare	1	Upon detonation, illuminates the area	3	0.5
Grapeshot	30–40		5	0.5
Red Haze	2–5	Releases a cloud of psychoactive gas (makes enemies more susceptible to Axii)	1	0.5
Samum	15–30	Stun +30%	5	0.5
Stenchbulb	5–10	Releases a cloud of foul-smelling gas that weakens all foes (reduces critical effect resistances)	4	0.5
Zerrikanian Sun	10–30	Stun +50%	5	0.5

Books

Books in *The Witcher 2* can be inspected and read, just like their real world counterparts. Some books confer a mechanical benefit when read, such as granting your character knowledge of a particular monster type. Others simply act as quest items or help convey extra setting information about the world. In some cases, reading books you find as quest items can help you solve puzzles or otherwise understand what is happening with a quest line's story.

You primarily obtain books by purchasing them from merchants or by looting them. Sometimes obtaining a given book signifies that you've progressed the plot to a certain point. A handful of books are encrypted, so you must go find another character to crack the code for you. If you attempt to read these, you get scrambled text samples.

Note that all books have a weight of 0, so you can carry as many as you want without taking up any encumbrance. Information you read in many books is added to your in-game journal. You can then sell that book back to a merchant but keep all of the knowledge you gained by reading it.

Novel Easter Eggs

- *The Alchemical Wedding* is named after a famous 17th-century treatise on alchemy, *The Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz*.
- *Feudal Society and Its Enemies* is named after Karl Popper's work of social philosophy, *Open Society and Its Enemies*.
- *Lure of the Temptress* is named in homage to the 1992 point-and-click adventure game of the same name.
- *Nekkers in the Mist* is named in homage to the biographical film *Gorillas in the Mist*, which chronicled the life and work of Dian Fossey.
- If you read the book *Song of the Hunt*, you find a poem closely modeled on "The Second Coming" by W.B. Yeats.
- *Wraiths: Fear and Trembling* is named after philosopher Soren Kierkegaard's work of religious philosophy, *Fear and Trembling*.

Book	Orens	Book	Orens	Book	Orens
About Dragons	11	The Dun Banner	4	Olcan's Notes	1
The Alchemical Wedding	4	The Duties and Goals of the Lodge	6	Olcan's Receipt	0
Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's First Letter to the Emperor	0	Falsified Orders Changing the Convoy's Route	0	Of Trolls and Trolling	7
Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's Second Letter to the Emperor	0	The Feudal Society and Its Enemies	4	The Pontar Valley	4
Ambassador Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's Third Letter to the Emperor	0	Finely Scribbled Notes	1	Renuald aep Matsen's Letter	0
Ancient Manuscript	0	From the Annals of Mahakaman History	4	The Realms of the Nordlings	4
The Arachas—A Study	7	Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters—Maintenance and Repair	6	Report for Thaler	1
Arrest Warrant	1	The Good Book	4	The Rose and the Flame	4
The Art of Magic	4	The Gnomes of Mahakam and Tir Tochair	4	The Rudiments of Pathomorphology	0
Aryan La Valette—Interrogation Report	0	The Grand Triple	0	Ruined Letter	0
Astrological Charts	0	The Great Book of Herbs	4	Rune Placement Description I	0
Astrological Curios	0	Harpies—Daughters of the Gale	5	Rune Placement Description II	0
Balin's First Map	1	The History of the Council of Mages	4	Rune Placement Description III	0
Balin's Journal I	1	A Hog Named Henselt	0	Rune Placement Description IV	0
Balin's Journal II	1	The Horrors of War: Rotfiends	4	Rune Placement Description V	0
Balin's Journal III	1	Hospital Files I	0	Rune Placement Description VI	0
Balin's Journal IV	1	Hospital Files II	0	The Runes of Power I	5
Balin's Second Map	1	Hospital Files III	0	The Runes of Power II	5
Balin's Third Map	1	Hospital Files IV	0	The Runes of Power III	5
Baltimore's Directions	0	Hospital Records	0	The Runes of Power IV	5
Bane of the Vrans	0	How to Kill a Bullvore	6	Scribe's Notes	0
Baroness La Valette—Interrogation Report	0	The Immortelle or the Dwarven Herb	0	Senit's Notes	0
Beings of the Element of Earth	9	Invisible Ink	0	Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's Order	1
Beings of the Element of Fire	0	Journal from the Eyla Tarn	0	Slaves of the Curse	7
Bernard Loredo's Letter	0	The Kayran—A Monograph	11	Soldiers' Note to Visionary	0
Blood of Elves	4	The Legendary Accursed	9	Soldiers' Orders	1
Bruxae—Eulogists of Death	5	Legend of the Blasphemer	4	Song of the Hunt	4
Captain's Log	0	Legend of the Oathbreaker	4	The Temerian Royal Dynasty	4
Captain's Report	0	Legend of the Kinslayer	4	The Temerian Special Forces	4
Cecil's Map	0	Legendary Treasures	0	The Thanedd Coup	4
The Conclave of Mages	4	Letter with a Soldier's Supplication	0	Three Years Among the Endregas	4
The Conjunction of the Spheres	4	Legend and Death of the White Rose	4	Tournament Announcement	0
Count Maravel's Correspondence	0	Louis Merse's Report	0	The Valley of the Flowers	4
Dandelion's Poetry Sketchbook	0	Lure of the Temptress	5	Venoms and Poisons	0
Dearhenna's Memoirs	1	Magic and Power	4	Veyopatis—A Forgotten God	4
Dearhenna's Notes I	0	Malget's Notes	0	The Visionary's Notes I	0
Dearhenna's Notes II	0	Margot's Farewell Letter	1	The Visionary's Notes II	0
Dearhenna's Notes III	0	Margot's Letter to Iorveth	0	The Visionary's Notes III	0
Dearhenna's Notes IV	0	Margot's Notes	1	The Viziman Uprising	4
Dearhenna's Notes V	0	Marshall Milan Raupenneck	4	The Wars for Upper Aedirn	4
Dethmold's Grimoire	0	Medical Notes on Patient 15	0	The White Flame	4
Dmitri's Letter of Safe Passage	1	Monstrum, or a Portrayal of Witchers	4	The Wild Hunt	0
Dorian's Diary	0	More than Aretuza	4	Wild Hunt Investigator's Notes	0
Do It Yourself	4	Nekkers in the Mist	2		
Drowners: A Textbook for Initiates of the Order of the Flaming Rose	2	The Nilfgaardian Provinces	4		

Trophies

A trophy is a body part hacked from the corpse of a freshly defeated monster and mounted on the hook that dangles from the back of Geralt's sword-harness. Most monsters have a random chance of dropping a trophy whenever you defeat them, while unique monsters always drop their trophy upon defeat. Trophies confer a variety of effects when equipped, some of them quite powerful if equipped to a build with the right synergies. Others are little more than curios or gag items.

Trophy	Category	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Orens	Weight
Arachas Trophy	Rare	Damage +3–4	Vitality +25	Damage bonus on signs +2		24	2
Bullvore Trophy	Magical	Armor +8				15	2
Draug Trophy	Epic	Armor +5	Damage +9	Vitality +55		61	4
Draugir Trophy	Rare	Damage +5	Vitality +15			14	3
Drowner Trophy	Common	Vitality +15				9	1
Elemental Trophy	Rare	Vitality +15	Damage bonus on signs +5			20	2
Elthon's Trophy	Rare	Armor +1	Vitality +1	Damage dealt to humans +1%	Damage bonus on signs +1	8	2
Endrega Trophy	Magical	Armor +3				15	6
Gargoyle Trophy	Magical	Armor +7	Vitality +20			22	2
Golem Trophy	Magical	Armor +10	Vitality +15			31	5
Harpy Trophy	Magical	Armor +4				8	1
Nekker Trophy	Magical	Damage +1				2	1
Rotfiend Trophy	Magical	Vitality +20				13	2
Troll Trophy	Magical	Damage +9				7	2
Werewolf Trophy	Rare	Armor +1	Vitality +10	Damage dealt to humans +1%	Damage bonus on signs +1	17	1
Wraith Trophy	Magical	Damage +6				3	2
Kayran Trophy	Epic	Armor +3	Vitality +50	Damage +5		51	5

Mutagens

Mutagens work like runes and armor enhancements, only they directly enhance Geralt's stats. Mutagens are equipped to mutagen slots that are opened up when talents are invested in certain skills, usually the skills in the upper half of a given skill tree. Like other enhancements, mutagens cannot be removed once they've been equipped into a slot.

Mutagens cannot be purchased. For the most part, they are obtained as random drops when defeating monsters or crafting alchemy items (if you take the right skill from the alchemist skill tree). It's worth noting that if you slot a mutagen to a skill and then re-spec your skills with the Operator or Lady Adrianna, you retain the mutagen's effect even if you do not repurchase the skill.

Since you cannot remove a mutagen once you've slotted it, it's best to slot only the strongest mutagens. Lesser mutagens are ideally sold off or held onto until the very end of the game, to slot in case you somehow never find anything better. Generally, any greater mutagens, madness mutagens, range mutagens, and concentration mutagens are worth slotting (depending on your build).

Mutagen	Type	Substance	Effect 1	Effect 2	Effect 3	Effect 4	Effect 5	Effect 6	Orens	Weight
Concentration	Epic	Caelum	Damage bonus on signs +1						44	0.1
Critical Effects	Magical	Rebis	Knockdown +2%	Stun +2%	Freeze +2%	Incineration +2%	Poison +2%	Bleeding +2%	13	0.1
Enhancement	Epic	Vitriol	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +3%						16	0.1
Greater Critical Effects	Rare	Rebis	Knockdown +3%	Stun +3%	Freeze +3%	Incineration +3%	Poison +3%	Bleeding +3%	33	0.1
Greater Enhancement	Epic	Vitriol	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +5%						39	0.1
Greater Power	Magical	Quebrith	Damage + (1-3)						35	0.1
Greater Strength	Rare	Vermilion	Armor +2	Vitality regeneration +1					42	0.1
Greater Vitality	Rare	Hydragenum	Vitality +10						45	0.1
Lesser Critical Effects	Magical	Rebis	Knockdown +1%	Stun +1%	Freeze +1%	Incineration +1%	Poison +1%	Bleeding +1%	7	0.1
Lesser Enhancement	Epic	Vitriol	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +1%						9	0.1
Lesser Power	Magical	Quebrith	Damage +1						8	0.1
Lesser Range	Rare	Aether	Aard sign range +2%	Igni sign range +2%					7	0.1
Lesser Strength	Magical	Vermilion	Armor +1						11	0.1
Lesser Vitality	Magical	Hydragenum	Vitality +2						13	0.1
Madness	Epic	Caelum	Armor +2	Damage bonus on signs +1	Vitality +5				63	0.1
Power	Magical	Quebrith	Damage + (1-2)						14	0.1
Range	Rare	Aether	Aard sign range +5%	Igni sign range +5%					14	0.1
Strength	Magical	Vermilion	Armor +2						18	0.1
Vitality	Magical	Hydragenum	Vitality +5						7	0.1

Lures

Lures work a bit like traps. Equip them to Geralt's pockets and you can place them with the command for using pocket-equipped items. There's a chance that a monster attracted to a given type of lure will be distracted by it, perhaps even taking a swipe at it. The distraction effect is temporary and does not necessarily affect all members of a group of monsters.

The best way to use lures is in conjunction with traps. Place traps at the edge of a monster's territory, or in an area where you know a monster is going to spawn. Place lures inside your traps' areas of effect. Wait until the monsters spawn, or go deeper into the monster's territory to get them to chase you. The lures help ensure that at least some of the monsters want to move directly toward your traps.

There are a lot of downsides to using lures, mainly the same ones to using traps. It can be tricky to place them without getting attacked by the monsters you're trying to lure. Even if you place a lure, monsters may still prefer to attack you if you're anywhere nearby. Most Geralt builds can safely ignore lures, but alchemists may find uses for them.

Lure	Affects	Orens	Weight
Bauble	Wraiths and drowners	2	0.5
Endrega Gland Extract	Endregas and arachasae	2	0.5
Phosphorescent Crystal	Harpies	2	0.5
Rotten Meat	Nekkers and trolls	1	0.5
Thumper	Bullvores and rotfiends	2	0.5

Junk

Junk is exactly you think it is, those items with no in-game function. You primarily find junk items as loot and can sell them off for orens. Junk can be found typically wherever you can find random loot, or picked up after defeating human opponents. All you can really do with junk is sell it off for orens. Most forms of junk aren't especially valuable, but occasionally you find valuable figurines that are worth selling.

Junk	Type	Sell	Weight
Apple	Food	2	0.1
Bindings	Junk	2	1
Candlestick	Bauble	5	0.5
Chains	Junk	2	1
Cucumber	Food	2	0.1
Encrusted Iron Ring	Trinket	4	0.1
Encrusted Scabbard	Junk	3	1
Encrusted Silver Medallion	Trinket	9	0.2
Encrusted Silver Ring	Trinket	6	0.1
Fish	Food	2	0.1
Fisherman's Net	Junk	2	0.2
Grappling Hook	Junk	2	0.2
Hunting Horn	Junk	4	0.5
Iron Band	Junk	2	0.5
Iron Ring	Trinket	3	0.1
Magnifying Glass	Trinket	6	0.1
Mug	Junk	2	0.1
Old Cheese	Food	2	0.1
Plum	Food	2	0.1
Potato	Food	2	0.1
Primitive Necklace	Trinket	2	0.2
Rags	Junk	2	0.2
Silver Ring	Trinket	5	0.1
Silver Sword Scabbard	Junk	5	1
Stone Medallion	Junk	2	0.2
Tools	Junk	3	0.5
Used Trap	Junk	2	0.5
Valuable Figurine	Trinket	6	0.5
Valuable Trinket	Trinket	4	0.5
Wire	Junk	2	0.1
Wire Rope	Junk	3	0.2
Wooden Rung Rope Ladder	Junk	4	0.2

Alchemy Materials

Alchemy materials contain alchemical substances that allow them to be used in making oils, bombs, and potions. You generally find alchemy materials by picking herbs that grow throughout the game's world, or by defeating monsters and harvesting their remains. You can take the alchemy tree Harvester skill to get more alchemy materials at once. Note that some monster drops that function as alchemy materials can also be used in crafting.

Material	Category	Substance	Orens	Weight
Amethyst Dust	Magical	Caelum	2	0.1
Arachas Armor	Common	Quebrith	24	2
Arachas Eyes	Common	Fulgur	19	0.5
Balisse	Common	Vitriol	1	0
Bryonia	Common	Caelum	2	0
Bullvore Brain	Common	Fulgur	11	0
Celandine	Common	Rebis	1	0
Cortinarius	Common	Hydragenum	2	0
Diamond Dust	Magical	Hydragenum	2	0.1
Draug Essence	Common	Fulgur	26	0.1
Draugir Claws	Common	Rebis	14	1
Drowner Brain	Common	Rebis	6	0.5
Dwarven Immortelle	Common	Fulgur	0	0
Elemental Stone	Common	Aether	2	1
Endrega Embryo	Common	Fulgur	4	0.5
Endrega Jaw	Common	Vitriol	4	0.4
Endrega Saliva	Common	Vitriol	3	0.1
Endrega Teeth	Common	Quebrith	4	0.5
Endrega Venom	Common	Caelum	4	1
Essence of Death	Common	Fulgur	9	0.1
Essence of Water	Common	Hydragenum	2	0.1
Gargoyle Dust	Common	Vermilion	9	0.1
Gargoyle Heart	Common	Quebrith	14	1
Green Mold	Common	Caelum	6	0
Harpy Egg	Common	Quebrith	4	0
Harpy Eyes	Common	Aether	4	0.1
Harpy Feathers	Common	Vermilion	9	0.1
Harpy Saliva	Common	Caelum	4	0.1
Kayran Eyes	Common	Fulgur	36	1
Kayran Tissue	Common	Fulgur	36	1
Mandrake Root	Common	Quebrith	2	0
Necrophage Blood	Common	Rebis	4	0.1
Necrophage Eyes	Common	Vitriol	5	0.1
Necrophage Skin	Common	Vermilion	5	0.5
Necrophage Teeth	Common	Rebis	4	0.1
Nekker Claws	Common	Hydragenum	2	0.1
Nekker Eyes	Common	Vitriol	2	0.1
Nekker Heart	Common	Rebis	4	0.5
Nekker Teeth	Common	Vitriol	4	1
Ostmurk	Common	Fulgur	0	0
Queen Endrega's Pheromones	Common	Fulgur	13	0
Rotfiend Tongue	Common	Caelum	4	0
Scleroderm	Magical	Aether	2	0
Troll Tongue	Common	Aether	19	1
Verbena	Common	Sol	2	0
White Myrtle Petals	Magical	Vitriol	1	0
Wolf's Aloe Leaves	Common	Sol	6	0
Wolfsbane	Common	Vermilion	2	0

Crafting Materials

Crafting materials are items that can be given to a craftsman along with a diagram to make a particular item. Some crafting materials are more commonly used than others, and likewise some are more easily found than others. Crafting materials come from a variety of sources. Some can be found as random loot in towns and caves, while others can only be obtained by killing monsters. Some crafting materials can themselves be crafted from other materials and the right diagram, or purchased outright from merchants.

Thoroughly scanning each area as Geralt passes through is a good way to pick up lots of extra crafting materials. These materials tend to be heavy, so it's best to keep things like timber, iron ore, cloth, leather, and twine in storage. You tend to pick up lots of these items, and the weight really piles up over time. Rare crafting materials like silver ore, the various meteorite ores, robust cloth, hardened leather, and studded leather should also be kept in storage for future use.

Material	Orens	Weight
Blue Meteorite Ore	2	0.5
Cloth	2	0.5
Dragon Scales	75	2
Draug Armor Fragment	1	3
Draugir Armor Fragment	1	3
Endrega Hide	5	2
Hardened Leather	2	1
Harpy Claws	4	0.1
Iron Frame	0	0
Iron Ore	2	1
Kayran Skin	31	2
Leather	2	1
Oil	2	0.5
Red Meteorite Ore	2	0.5
Robust Cloth	2	0.5
Silver Ore	3	1
Studded Leather	3	1
Timber	1	1
Troll Skin	1	2
Twine	2	0.1
Yellow Meteorite Ore	2	0.5

Formulas

Geralt uses formulas to combine alchemy materials he has on hand into whatever the formula makes. You can obtain formulas for creating potions, bombs, and oils. Most formulas must be purchased, but some can be obtained as loot, and you begin the game with a handful of basic formulas. Formulas can be used to craft items whenever Geralt can successfully meditate, so you can usually make whatever you need on the fly. Note that you must have a formula physically in your inventory in order to craft from it. Note that the formula for blade oil is an exception to every other formula in the game. It does not produce a bomb, potion, or (as you might expect) an oil you can apply to your sword's blade. Brewing the blade oil formula simply produces the crafting material oil, just as if you'd used the diagram for oil. It is useful mainly as an alternative way to craft oil, which tends to be in short supply toward the end of the game

Formula	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Orens	Weight
Arachid Oil	1 Rebis	1 Quebrith	1 Hydragenum	1 Vermilion		5	0.1
Blade Oil	1 Vermilion	1 Rebis	1 Hydragenum	1 Quebrith	1 Aether	4	0.1
Brock	1 Vitriol	1 Aether	1 Quebrith	1 Caelum		5	0.1
Brown Oil	1 Rebis	1 Hydragenum	1 Vermilion	1 Caelum		6	0.1
Cat	1 Aether	1 Vermilion	1 Hydragenum			4	0.1
Dancing Star	1 Vitriol	1 Aether				4	0.1
Devil's Puffball	1 Caelum	1 Quebrith				4	0.1
Dragon's Dream	1 Aether	1 Vermilion				5	0.1
Falka's Blood	1 Vitriol	1 Vermilion	1 Caelum	1 Quebrith		7	0.1
Flare	1 Vermilion	1 Caelum				2	0.1
Gadwall	1 Rebis	1 Vermilion	1 Caelum	1 Sol	1 Aether	7	0.1
Golden Oriole	1 Rebis	1 Vermilion	1 Caelum			3	0.1
Grapeshot	1 Rebis	1 Caelum				4	0.1
Hanged Man's Venom	1 Caelum	1 Sol	1 Vitriol	1 Quebrith		5	0.1
Healing Brew	1 Rebis	1 Vitriol	1 Aether	1 Caelum		0	0.1
Lapwing	1 Rebis	1 Aether	1 Caelum	1 Fulgur		7	0.1
Maribor Forest	1 Rebis	1 Vermilion	1 Caelum	1 Sol		7	0.1
Mongoose	1 Rebis	1 Aether	1 Fulgur			9	0.1
Necrophage Oil	1 Hydragenum	1 Sol	1 Vitriol	1 Quebrith		6	0.1
Petri's Philtre	1 Rebis	1 Aether	1 Quebrith			12	0.1
Red Haze	1 Aether	1 Hydragenum	1 Quebrith			4	0.1
Rook	1 Vitriol	1 Vermilion	1 Hydragenum			8	0.1
Samum	1 Aether	1 Rebis				5	0.1
Specter Oil	1 Rebis	1 Hydragenum	1 Aether	1 Caelum		5	0.1
Stammelford's Philtre	1 Vitriol	1 Aether	1 Hydragenum	1 Fulgur		9	0.1
Stenchbulb	1 Hydragenum	1 Aether				3	0.1
Swallow	1 Vitriol	1 Aether	1 Caelum			4	0.1
Tawny Owl	1 Vitriol	1 Vermilion	1 Quebrith	1 Fulgur		9	0.1
Thunderbolt	2 Quebrith	2 Hydragenum				6	0.1
Tiara	1 Hydragenum	1 Aether	1 Quebrith			4	0.1
Virga	1 Vitriol	1 Caelum	1 Quebrith			5	0.1
Whirl	1 Vitriol	1 Aether	1 Rebis	1 Caelum		9	0.1
White Raffard's Decoction	1 Vitriol	1 Vermilion	1 Hydragenum	1 Sol		5	0.1
Wolf	1 Rebis	1 Aether	1 Hydragenum			4	0.1
Zerrikanian Sun	1 Rebis	1 Vitriol				5	0.1

Diagrams

Diagrams are similar to formulas, but Geralt cannot craft from diagrams by himself. To craft from a diagram, Geralt must take the diagram, all the materials required to complete it, and enough orens to pay the diagram's crafting fee to a craftsman. Any craftsman can craft any diagram and charges exactly the same crafting fee. Geralt must have a diagram physically in his inventory in order to craft from it.

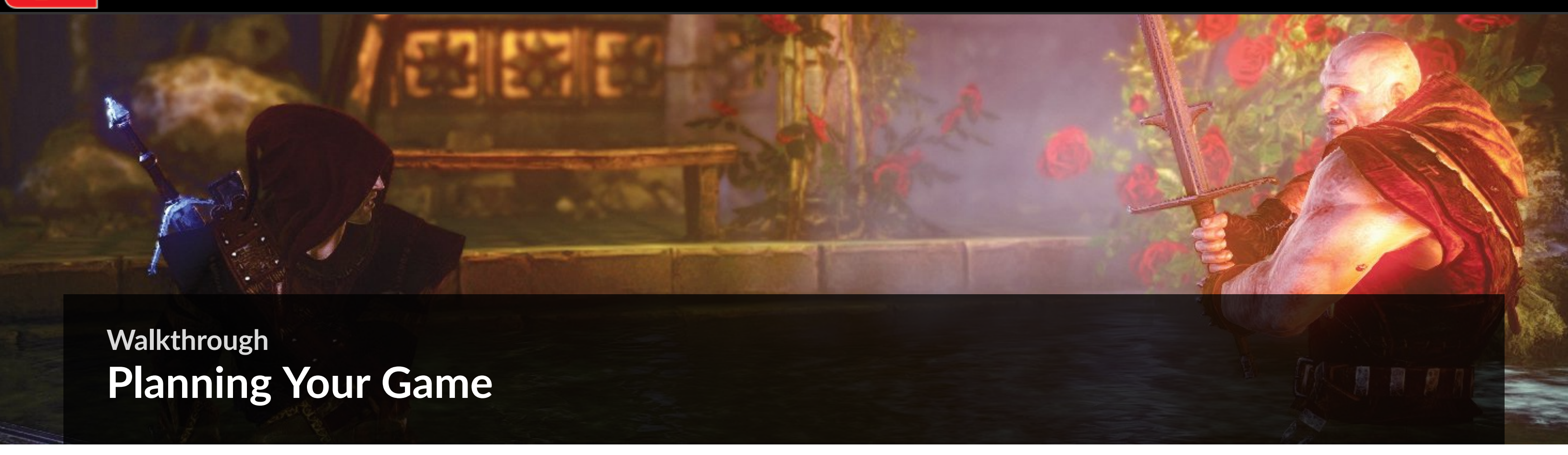
Some diagrams only need to be crafted once, particularly the diagrams that create equipment. It's safe to sell these diagrams off once you're through with them. Other diagrams that make consumables, like traps, should be kept in Geralt's inventory for future use. Most diagrams must be purchased from merchants, but some can be found as loot (and even as random loot, if you get lucky).

Diagram Confusion

Most diagrams produce the exact item they're named after. A handful of diagrams have slightly different names from the items they produce, though. Consult this table to see if you're dealing with a diagram with an unusual name.

Diagram Name	Item Name
Diagram: Kayran Carapace Armor Reinforcements	Kayran Carapace Reinforcements
Diagram: Kayran Skin Armor	Kayran Carapace Armor
Diagram: Robust Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	Robust Blue Meteorite Sword
Diagram: Robust Red Meteorite Silver Sword	Robust Red Meteorite Sword
Diagram: Solid Cloth	Robust Cloth
Diagram: Superb Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	Superb Blue Meteorite Sword
Diagram: Superb Red Meteorite Silver Sword	Superb Red Meteorite Sword
Diagram: Superb Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	Superb Yellow Meteorite Sword
Diagram: Temerian Steel Sword	Temerian Sword
Diagram: Witcher's Robust Silver Sword	Robust Witcher's Silver Sword
Diagram: Witcher's Superb Silver Sword	Superb Witcher's Silver Sword

Diagram	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Orens	Weight	Craft Price
Amethyst Armor Enhancement	3 Amethyst Dust	2 Twine	2 Oil			9	0.1	15
Amethyst Dust	1 Drowner Brain	2 Nekker Eyes				12	0.1	5
Anathema	4 Iron Ore	12 Silver Ore	5 Timber	2 Yellow Meteorite Ore	4 Nekker Teeth	21	0.1	135
Armor of Ys	20 Robust Cloth	12 Studded Leather	1 Troll Skin	5 Nekker Claws	10 Twine	144	0.1	825
Biter	2 Oil	1 Timber	1 Twine			10	0.1	20
Black Unicorn	14 Iron Ore	2 Hardened Leather	3 Timber	2 Blue Meteorite Ore	5 Amethyst Dust	20	0.1	175
Blasphemer's Armor	14 Studded Leather	8 Nekker Claws	4 Amethyst Dust	4 Diamond Dust	6 Robust Cloth	41	0.1	150
Blasphemer's Boots	4 Hardened Leather	2 Studded Leather	4 Robust Cloth	1 Endrega Hide		6	0.1	25
Blasphemer's Gauntlets	4 Hardened Leather	2 Studded Leather	4 Twine	1 Endrega Venom		9	0.1	40
Blasphemer's Trousers	4 Hardened Leather	4 Studded Leather	6 Robust Cloth	4 Endrega Hide		8	0.1	40
Blue Meteorite Ore	2 Silver Ore	1 Earth Rune	1 Moon Rune	1 Diamond Dust		13	0.1	30
Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	5 Iron Ore	4 Silver Ore	1 Blue Meteorite Ore	15	0.1	35
Caerme	14 Iron Ore	2 Timber	4 Harpy Feathers			26	0.1	230
Ceremonial Sword of Deithwen	26 Iron Ore	4 Timber	5 Arachas Armor			26	0.1	260
Clawer	2 Oil	1 Endrega Venom	1 Timber			9	0.1	20
Conflagration	2 Endrega Embryo	1 Oil	1 Timber			11	0.1	20
Deerg Ruadhri	20 Robust Cloth	12 Hardened Leather	1 Arachas Armor	8 Twine		71	0.1	800
Diamond Armor Reinforcements	3 Diamond Dust	2 Twine	2 Oil			12	0.1	25
Diamond Dust	2 Silver Ore	1 Necrophage Teeth				14	0.1	50
Draug Armor	18 Robust Cloth	8 Hardened Leather	1 Draug Essence	8 Twine	1 Draug Armor Fragment	66	0.1	750
Earth Rune	1 Essence of Water	1 Elemental Stone	5 Silver Ore			19	0.1	50
Elder Blood Boots	3 Cloth	2 Leather	2 Twine			12	0.1	55
Elder Blood Gauntlets	4 Cloth	2 Hardened Leather	1 Twine			16	0.1	75
Elder Blood Trousers	4 Cloth	2 Hardened Leather	2 Twine			1	0.1	90
Elemental Stone	1 Gargoyle Heart	1 Amethyst Dust				10	0.1	5
Endrega Hide Armor Reinforcements	6 Leather	4 Twine	2 Oil	5 Endrega Teeth		9	0.1	50
Essence of Water	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust				10	0.1	5
Fire Rune	1 Essence of Water	1 Elemental Stone	8 Endrega Saliva			24	0.1	50
Hardened Leather	3 Leather	2 Oil				11	0.1	5
Hardened Leather Boots	3 Robust Cloth	2 Hardened Leather	2 Twine			15	0.1	20
Harpy Trap	2 Oil	1 Timber	1 Silver Ore			9	0.1	20
Heavy Leather Jacket	8 Cloth	10 Leather	4 Twine	1 Hardened Leather		12	0.1	100
Heavy Leather Trousers	4 Cloth	2 Hardened Leather	4 Twine			6	0.1	25
Hunter's Armor	14 Cloth	14 Leather	6 Twine			24	0.1	225
Jagged Blade	16 Iron Ore	16 Iron Ore	15 Endrega Teeth			15	0.1	140
Kayran Carapace Armor Reinforcements	8 Hardened Leather	6 Twine	3 Oil	1 Kayran Skin		12	0.1	20
Kayran Skin Armor	14 Solid Cloth	6 Hardened Leather	1 Kayran Skin	8 Twine		34	0.1	375
Kayran Trap	1 Iron Frame	2 Oil	1 Iron Ore	1 Silver Ore		12	0.1	20
Kinslayer's Armor	16 Hardened Leather	18 Robust Leather	2 Twine	2 Harpy Saliva	4 Harpy Feathers	176	0.1	750
Kinslayer's Boots	4 Hardened Leather	4 Studded Leather	4 Gargoyle Dust	2 Robust Cloth		15	0.1	100
Kinslayer's Gauntlets	4 Hardened Leather	4 Studded Leather	4 Robust Cloth	2 Gargoyle Dust	2 Harpy Feathers	16	0.1	100
Kinslayer's Trousers	4 Twine	4 Studded Leather	2 Robust Cloth	1 Dragon Scales	1 Troll Tongue	33	0.1	150
Leather	1 Cloth	1 Oil	1 Necrophage Skin			2	0.1	5
Leather Jacket	4 Cloth	4 Leather	4 Twine			6	0.1	50
Light Leather Armor	10 Cloth	12 Leather	6 Twine			15	0.1	40
Long Leather Gauntlets	1 Cloth	2 Leather	2 Twine			30	0.1	25
Long Studded Leather Gauntlets	2 Robust Cloth	2 Hardened Leather	3 Twine			7	0.1	30
Magic Wrap	2 Studded Leather	1 Troll Skin	2 Necrophage Skin	2 Essence of Death		16	0.1	40
Mahakaman Sihil	20 Iron ore	4 Timber	2 Elemental Stone			14	0.1	125
Moon Rune	1 Essence of Water	1 Elemental Stone	4 Diamond Dust			19	0.1	50
Mourner	18 Iron Ore	4 Leather	2 Timber	3 Gargoyle Dust	2 Essence of Death	41	0.1	275
Nilfgaardian Falconer's Gauntlets	4 Cloth	2 Hardened Leather	2 Twine			6	0.1	25
Oathbreaker's Armor	18 Studded Leather	1 Draugir Armor Fragment	2 Twine	1 Diamond Dust	12 Robust Cloth	76	0.1	550
Oathbreaker's Boots	2 Studded Leather	4 Hardened Leather	2 Robust Cloth	2 Essence of Death		11	0.1	70
Oathbreaker's Gauntlets	6 Hardened Leather	4 Studded Leather	2 Robust Cloth	4 Twine	2 Amethyst Dust	11	0.1	60
Oathbreaker's Trousers	4 Hardened Leather	4 Harpy Feathers	4 Robust Cloth	4 Twine		29	0.1	135
Oil	1 Necrophage Skin	1 Necrophage Blood				6	0.1	5
Rage	2 Oil	1 Timber	1 Nekker Heart			11	0.1	20
Red Meteorite Ore	2 Silver Ore	1 Fire Rune	1 Moon Rune	1 Diamond Dust		15	0.1	25
Red Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	5 Iron Ore	4 Silver Ore	1 Red Meteorite Ore	7	0.1	60
Robust Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	6 Iron Ore	8 Silver Ore	2 Blue Meteorite Ore	26	0.1	250
Robust Cutlass	18 Iron Ore	4 Timber				8	0.1	65
Robust Kaedweni Sword	14 Iron Ore	3 Timber				9	0.1	75
Robust Red Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	6 Iron Ore	8 Silver Ore	2 Red Meteorite Ore	10	0.1	90
Robust Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	6 Iron Ore	8 Silver Ore	2 Yellow Meteorite Ore	12	0.1	105
Short Sword	8 Iron Ore	2 Timber				5	0.1	40
Solid Cloth	3 Cloth	2 Twine	1 Diamond Dust			12	0.1	5
Studded Leather	2 Hardened Leather	1 Oil	1 Twine			11	0.1	5
Studded Leather Trousers	2 Robust Cloth	2 Studded Leather	5 Twine			4	0.1	25
Sun Rune	1 Essence of Water	1 Elemental Stone	4 Amethyst Dust			19	0.1	50
Superb Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	8 Iron Ore	14 Silver Ore	1 Blue Meteorite	23	0.1	220
Superb Leather Trousers	3 Cloth	2 Leather	3 Twine			6	0.1	25
Superb Red Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	8 Iron Ore	14 Silver Ore	3 Red Meteorite	14	0.1	123
Superb Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	8 Iron Ore	14 Silver Ore	3 Yellow Meteorite	15	0.1	140
Sword of Caingorn	8 Iron Ore	1 Timber				5	0.1	35
Talgar Winter	2 Oil	1 Timber	1 Amethyst Dust			12	0.1	20
Temerian Steel Sword	8 Iron Ore	4 Timber				5	0.1	40
Ultimatum	12 Iron Ore	2 Hardened Leather	2 Timber	1 Diamond Dust	5 Nekker Teeth	21	0.1	125
Virgin	12 Iron Ore	14 Silver Ore	2 Timber	2 Diamond Dust	2 Essence of Death	39	0.1	200
Vran Armor	1 Armor of Ysgith	1 Vran Armor Enhancement	4 Studded Leather	6 Cloth	7 Twine	1	0.1	2000
Weeper	2 Iron Ore	14 Silver Ore	2 Timber	2 Blue Meteorite Ore	4 Elemental Stone	41	0.1	250
Well-Balanced Dagger	2 Iron Ore	1 Timber				3	0.1	5
Witcher's Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Timber	1 Iron Ore	2 Silver Ore		5	0.1	35
Witcher's Robust Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Timber	1 Iron Ore	2 Silver Ore		6	0.1	45
Witcher's Superb Silver Sword	4 Iron Ore	4 Silver Ore	1 Timber	1 Diamond Dust		9	0.1	75
Yellow Meteorite Ore	2 Silver Ore	1 Sun Rune	1 Moon Rune	1 Diamond Dust		11	0.1	25
Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	1 Diamond Dust	1 Amethyst Dust	5 Iron Ore	4 Silver Ore	1 Yellow Meteorite	8	0.1	65
Ysgith Rune	1 Essence of Water	1 Elemental Stone	8 Nekker Heart			19	0.1	50
Zerrikanterment	1 Diamond Dust	1 Dragon Scale	10 Iron Ore	16 Silver Ore	3 Yellow Meteorite	25	0.1	180



Walkthrough

Planning Your Game

You are Geralt of Rivia, witcher, a monster-hunter framed for the murder of King Foltest of Temeria. You must clear your name by tracking down and identifying the true kingslayer, then bringing him to justice. You'd much rather be focusing on your ravishing lover, Triss, or recovering from the bout of amnesia you've suffered from for months, but both of these goals must wait.

After you set out on the kingslayer's trail, you quickly find yourself forced to make decisions with far-reaching consequences. Your allies beg for your help and your actions have a profound effect on the complex politics of the north. You've set out on a journey to find the murderer, but by the end of your travels you may have forged a new kingdom, unraveled a sorcerous conspiracy, or rescued a lost princess.

To put it in plainer terms, *The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition* is a game that can become very different depending on choices you make during your playthrough. These decisions affect not only the game's storyline, but also side quests, equipment, and Geralt's character attributes. This variation can make replays rewarding but may also result in confusion or disappointment if a choice has consequences you don't enjoy.

Before you begin a trip through *The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition*, it's best to have a plan. So before you dive into the walkthrough, take a moment to read this section, which explains in broad strokes how this game is structured and what you should know about playing through it.

Major Decisions

The most important decision you make in the game is at the end of Chapter 1, when you must decide to ally yourself with either Vernon Roche of Temeria or Iorveth, the elven freedom fighter. The entirety of Chapter 2 and much of Chapter 3 change depending on which ally you choose. In addition, in Chapter 3 you must choose between your ally from Chapter 2 and Triss Merigold.

The walkthrough flags major decisions when you come to them, but the game-altering nature of the choices means you cannot simply read this walkthrough straight through from beginning to end. The walkthrough covers all the possible content in the game, so it includes coverage of quests and situations that won't occur in your game. Instead, when you make a major decision, you are told to turn to a certain page that matches up with where you should be in your game. If you wish to see all of the game's quests and scenarios, you must replay it while making different choices.

Note

You may wonder if some decisions in *The Witcher 2* are simply "better" than others. When it comes to the major decisions, that is generally not the case. While there are some differences in terms of tone and feel between Iorveth and Roche's routes in the game, both routes offer a fair share of interesting equipment to obtain, quests to complete, and monsters to battle.

If you are a story-focused player who intends to play the game multiple times, this guide recommends allying with Iorveth on your first playthrough, then Roche on your second. On these playthroughs, follow your ally when you choose between him and Triss in Chapter 3. To do a playthrough focusing on allying with Triss, ally with Roche in Chapter 2 and then Triss in Chapter 3 (although you can ally with Triss in Iorveth's version of Chapter 2 if you wish).

Just as the decisions you make throughout the course of a game change which locations you visit and quests you can complete, they also affect your ending. There are eight possible endings to *The Witcher 2*, dictated largely by the choices you've made at major points in the game. Each ending has its own "final board" cutscene that sums up the choices you've made. Generally, choices that influence Geralt's allegiances or whether a given NPC lives or dies can influence the final board, though not all choices of this nature do so. The walkthrough points out decisions that influence your ending. You can flip to the "Endings Guide" section to see a flow chart that shows how the various endings fit together.

Note

Some of Geralt's decisions must be made as a timer rapidly counts down. If you can't decide quickly enough, then Geralt takes whatever decision option you had highlighted when the timer ran out. Timed decisions generally only occur during particularly tense situations. Most of the game's timed decisions affect only the game's flavor, but there is one in Chapter 1 that can affect the way certain main quests play out.

Quests

The Witcher 2 presents its plot as a series of quests, with the option to take on additional side quests as Geralt explores the world around him. Since where Geralt is in the story usually dictates which quests he can complete, quests are covered in a suggested order for completing them in the walkthrough. Many quests are time-sensitive and are automatically failed if you progress the story such that Geralt leaves an area with quests incomplete. It's usually clear when the game is giving you a bit of downtime between plot points that you can use for completing side quests. Completing quests intelligently is crucial to leveling up, since many quests offer hefty XP rewards for completing them and may offer bonuses for completing them in certain ways. It is extremely difficult to reach the game's level cap if you're skipping side quests.

If you do not want to follow the walkthrough as you play, but instead want to consult it only for information on specific quests, then turn to the index. Search for the quest's in-game title to find out which page of the walkthrough begins covering it. For complex quests like **The Assassins of Kings** that can be progressed in each chapter, you may use the index to find where coverage for what you do for that quest in a specific chapter begins.

When it comes to making decisions that affect individual quests, you need to be careful. It is possible to refuse or fail many quests by saying the wrong thing. There are even situations where you can die in a cutscene if you say the wrong thing. The walkthrough tracks all of these instances on a quest-by-quest basis. Each version of each chapter offers a suggested order for completing quests, which you can follow by simply playing along with the way the section is written. In addition, a player who wants to play mostly "blind" and consult the walkthrough only when stuck on a quest can do so. Simply use the index listed at the back of the book to look up which page of the walkthrough describes the quest you're currently engaged in. All quests are indexed by their in-game title.

The guide also notes other things story-oriented players can do to get extra information about the setting, usually by obtaining certain books or speaking with certain NPCs.

Difficulty Level

The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition on Xbox 360 offers four difficulty levels: Easy, Normal, Hard, and Dark. The PC version of the game contains an unusual additional difficulty level, Insane (see sidebar). This walkthrough was written on Normal difficulty, but it can also be used on Easy and Hard difficulties. Simply keep in mind that enemy placement and behavior may differ slightly on Easy and Hard. Also, all quick-time event (QTE) sequences are removed on Easy difficulty. Players who wish to play on Dark difficulty are advised to read the "Dark Mode" section. Note that Dark difficulty is not intended for a player who is going through the game for the first time.

Enemy strategies provided in the walkthrough are general, as factors like difficulty level and character build can have a profound effect on which strategies work best in a given game. Especially on lower difficulties, every enemy encounter can be handled in a variety of ways. Even on Hard difficulty, combinations of items and skills may work very well for you that wouldn't work well for the average player or for other Geralt builds. Consult the "How to Build a Witcher" section for more information about developing Geralt.

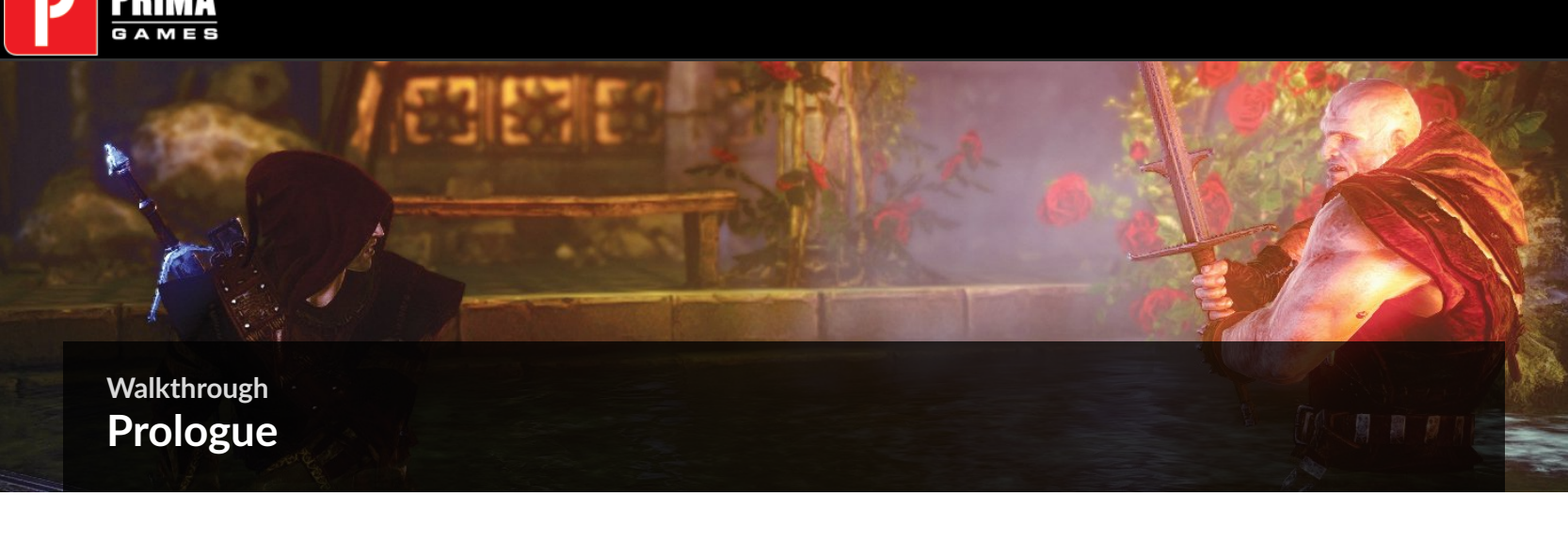
Achievements

For players concerned with racking up Gamerscore in *The Witcher 2*, the walkthrough provides information on where you can easily nab certain achievements. The "Achievements Guide" section provides a complete list of achievements.

For PC Players

Players of The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition on PC get access to an additional difficulty level, Insane. Insane difficulty is very similar to Dark difficulty, especially in terms of how strong enemies are. Unlike Dark difficulty, there are no special items you can obtain to increase Geralt's stats to the same degree. In addition, while playing on Insane mode, permadeath is enabled. If Geralt dies, your save is automatically erased and you will be forced to start the game over from the very beginning. Many of the same techniques that work for completing Dark difficulty are equally useful on Insane difficulty.

In addition to Insane difficulty, PC players also have the option of importing saved data from The Witcher when beginning a game of The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition. Importing saved data does not significantly change the game's mechanics. You should still be able to follow the guide's descriptions of quest outcomes and pursue roughly the same plot lines. Some dialogue in cutscenes and conversations will be different to reflect your choices in the prior game. If you sided with the Order in The Witcher, there are a handful of other effects your imported save data has during Chapter 3.



Walkthrough

Prologue

This segment of the game serves to ease you into *The Witcher 2*, but it's important not to confuse it with a tutorial. You can (and probably will) die a few times the first time you play through. You'll do fine if you remember to make intelligent use of the many potions, traps, and bombs you have on hand. Don't hoard these items—use them freely in conjunction with signs like Quen, Aard, and Yrden. Play around with the different signs during this segment of the game and get a feel for which ones you like using.

Note that this walkthrough is compatible with Easy, Normal, and Hard difficulties. Players who wish to play on Dark difficulty are advised to read the "Dark Mode Guide" section. Note that Dark difficulty is not intended for a player who is going through the game for the first time. It is recommended that a player interested in Dark mode first complete the game on Hard difficulty.

The Dungeons of the La Valettes

The game begins with Geralt in the dungeons of La Valette Castle, being interrogated by Blue Stripes commander Vernon Roche. Geralt tells the story of how he came to be in prison, which triggers the quests for this chapter. Geralt's dialog responses trigger different parts of the prologue's gameplay. You can play this section out of order, but this is not recommended. It's best to select Geralt's responses in order, from top to bottom, so you experience the story in a linear way.

Day of the Assault: Dawn

The Assassins of Kings

Geralt begins his story with his last day of service to King Foltest of Temeria. He came into the king's service one month ago, when he saved him from an assassin. That assassin may be another witcher, making Geralt's position precarious. Geralt's goal on his last day of service was to leave Foltest's court as quickly as possible.

The Assassins of Kings is one of the two quests that represent the main plot of *The Witcher 2*. You will not complete this quest until Chapter 3, but certain decisions you make in this and other parts of the game can progress it in different ways. These decisions are noted when appropriate in the walkthrough.

> **Note**
>
> Some of your decisions while in King Foltest's camp and other parts of the Prologue can trigger journal entries. You can choose to read Geralt's journal (written by his friend Dandelion) to learn more about the many characters who appear in *The Witcher 2*'s cast. In particular, it can help you keep track of who's alive and who's dead in your particular game.

By the King's Will

After the opening cutscene, this quest begins with a brief conversation with Triss in your tent. The dialogue options here are mostly for flavor, so you can say whatever you like. After your conversation with Triss ends, begin exploring the camp. You don't need to rush toward the meeting with Foltest. Instead, explore the camp area thoroughly. You can find lots of herbs to pick and minor treasures to claim by scanning the area with your medallion.

Speak with the Temerian recruit at the bottom of the slope that leads into camp to learn a bit more information about the main storyline. Just beyond that, you can find a pair of burly, shirtless Crinfrid reavers discussing their apprentice, Newboy, who's made a bet involving a magic amulet. Speak to them to trigger the beginning of the **Melitele's Heart** side quest.

Side Quest: Melitele's Heart

The conversation you have with Newboy and the Crinfrid reavers determines how the first part of this quest plays out. To trigger the quest, simply approach the reavers and press the interaction button to begin a dialogue scene.

After your wolf medallion accurately assesses that the amulet is magical, you are given conversation options. If you say "The amulet could help," then Newboy goes into battle not wearing armor. He is fated to die in this situation and you'll find his body later in the game. You will not be able to progress the quest any further.

If you say "I doubt it," Geralt persuades Newboy that the amulet is magical but convinces him that he should still wear armor into battle. In this scenario, Newboy keeps the amulet but survives so that you can encounter him later in the game. If you take this route, it is possible to obtain the amulet, but you have to kill Newboy and loot his body to get it.

If you say "Where did you get this?" you find out about the amulet's origins and then get another set of dialogue tree options. "I'd say the amulet could help you" results in the outcome where Newboy dies in battle. "It's infused with magic, though what kind, I don't know" results in the outcome where Newboy wears both the amulet and plate armor into battle, forcing you to kill him later if you want to continue the quest.

If you say "Seems to me the amulet brings trouble," you can convince Newboy and the reavers that the amulet is magical but cursed. Newboy decides to get rid of the amulet and the reavers offer to give it to Geralt in payment for his advice. You must choose to accept the amulet, called Newboy's talisman, to continue the quest. Newboy wears plate into battle in this case and survives to be encountered later in the game.

If you obtain the amulet this way, you will discover that it really is cursed. So long as you are carrying it, it reduces Geralt's armor rating by 10 percent. At this point in the game that's not a steep penalty, since chances are your armor isn't very strong to begin with. Later in the game, this penalty can become crippling. So why do you want Geralt to get the amulet? Well, if he has it at the end of the Prologue, he can undertake a quest in Chapter 1 that uncurses it. Once you lift the curse, the talisman becomes a beneficial item that offers a vitality bonus.

By the King's Will

Continue to explore the camp. You can also attempt to obtain the useful Pyromaniac character attribute before moving on. As you should see by glancing at the map of Foltest's camp, there is a circle of vigor you can activate there. It happens to be right next to a campfire. If you are very patient, you can activate the circle of vigor, then start walking through the campfire to set Geralt on fire. This is unlikely to kill you if the circle of vigor is boosting your vitality regeneration. You need to take a certain amount of damage from fire to get Pyromaniac, so you are going to have to set Geralt on fire about 15 times to get the attribute. Pyromaniac is extremely useful for alchemist Geralt builds or, really, any player who likes to use the Incineration critical effect. Pyromaniac boosts any base chance of incineration by an additional 20 percent (that is, if you have a +10 percent chance of incineration, Pyromaniac boosts it to 12 percent).

In an area to the southeast on your map, you find soldiers practicing with training dummies. Knock down five of them and this will count toward unlocking the Experienced attribute, which helps Geralt level up more quickly. In the very rear of this area, you can find a soldier who offers to arm-wrestle and a soldier who offers to play dice poker if you talk to them.

After you're done exploring (and looting) the camp, head toward King Foltest's location. Once you near the marker, you trigger a series of cutscenes. After the cutscenes, there's a sequence where Foltest asks you to use a spyglass to help him aim his ballista at Count Etcheverry.

> Pay careful attention to the dialogue between King Foltest and Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen at the beginning of this quest, particularly when wounded soldiers are mentioned. This is a direct reference to a similar famous conversation said to have been held by Napoleon Bonaparte and Tsar Alexander I, shortly after Napoleon's victory at the Battle of Austerlitz.

To hit Etcheverry, you need to aim just a little bit below him with the spyglass, so that you're hitting the wall. You're roughly trying to aim at where Etcheverry's feet would be. If you do this correctly, Geralt gives King Foltest the correct instructions to hit Etcheverry and other soldiers on the battlement with the ballista. This unlocks the Eagle Eye achievement for you. If your aim is off, then the ballista's bolt misses and you may face more enemies on foot later in the quest.

After the ballista fires, you follow King Foltest into his massive multistory siege tower. Once you reach the top of it, **By the King's Will** concludes and you briefly return to Geralt's conversation with Roche in the present. At this point, select "The assault" to trigger the next part of the Prologue's series of main quests. Again, you can choose to skip ahead, but this isn't recommended.

Day of the Assault: Morning

At the Fore

When you exit the siege tower, you can get your first taste of combat. Foltest's heavily armored men can easily win the day here, but you can join in to end things more quickly.

After this skirmish ends, you find the way ahead of Foltest's men blocked by archers firing a wall of flaming arrows down from a tower. You're tasked with seizing control of a ballista in the courtyard below and using it to eliminate the archers. This battle can serve as an excellent opportunity to improve your skills in combat.

Barricade

This may sound a bit obvious, but once you have control of Geralt, do not walk directly forward after you descend the ramp. Your witcher powers cannot save you from flaming arrows. Instead, look carefully around the left-hand side of the battlement you're standing on for a way to safely climb down into the courtyard. You should find an area where the battlement crumbles, with a series of wooden scaffolds below it.

Don't immediately set foot in the courtyard. The moment you do, Geralt is going to be under attack. Instead, pause at some point during your climb and meditate. If you've been collecting herbs diligently, you should have enough to brew some Rook, Golden Oriole, and Petri's Philtre potions in addition to the Lapwing and Swallow potions you should be already carrying. (You'll also have some Cat potion, but this isn't one you want to use in a fight.) You can also use alchemy to create extras of certain bombs, oils, and potions you're already carrying.

At the very least, drink a Swallow potion before you step into the courtyard. At your Inventory menu, make sure you've equipped your bombs, traps, and throwing daggers to your pockets and selected one for immediate use. Bombs and traps are particularly useful here, since you can use them to affect multiple enemies at once. If you use the conflagration traps, be careful not to set yourself on fire. If you do, you can use the Quen sign to quickly put yourself out.

Make sure a sign you want to use is also set to your active slot. While you can switch signs in battle, time only slows down slightly while you're in the menu that lets you do so. It's generally easier to assign a sign you want to use to your active slot before a battle, then stick to using that before the fight ends. This guide recommends Quen for this fight (and most others), but you can try using whatever works for your personal play style. Axii can be particularly useful when fighting groups of enemies like the soldiers here.

Finally, you should be carrying some hanged man's venom that you can use to oil your steel sword before the fight begins. Once you've applied all of your buffs, drop into the courtyard and be ready to start fighting. Three soldiers in mail are waiting for you. With all of your buffs up, you should be able to dispatch them rapidly with light attacks. If you get surrounded, use Geralt's dodge roll to get clear. Even with buffs up, Geralt can be quickly killed if he gets trapped in a knot of enemies.

There's a group of four soldiers in mail lurking behind a pile of lumber, but you can mop them up later. Instead, after you dispatch the first group of enemies, head toward the ballista. This triggers an attack by another group of enemies—one carries a tower shield and another wears plate. Pick off the lightly defended enemies first, then work on the heavier ones. If you can catch the whole group with a samum bomb, you can easily roll around to your foes' backs and hit them with heavy blows. You can also defeat the heavy foes more methodically by blocking their blows, then counterattacking. If you've used hanged man's venom, a handful of blows can take down even the most heavily armed foes in this part of the game.

Two archers remain between you and the ballista. Use your signs to help take them out, either directly with Aard or Axii, or by tossing on Quen and rapidly dodge-rolling toward them so you can take them out at melee range. Once the archers are cleared, you need to take out another knot of soldiers, one of whom has a shield, before you can crank the ballista. After you do, a few more soldiers attack. Take them out quickly, then aim the ballista. Two more soldiers, one in plate armor, attack.

After you've defeated them, you can fire the ballista—but first take a look around. Not too far from the ballista itself, you should find a white-clad would-be assassin who died trying to leap from an impossible height into a pile of hay. Finding him gains Geralt the surprisingly useful Assassin attribute.

> *Assassin's Creed* fans may notice that the dead assassin is modeled on Altair, the hero of the first game in the series. It's worth noting that the first *Assassin's Creed* game's flashback sequences take place during roughly the same period of history that the world of *The Witcher* books is modeled on.

When you hear King Foltest tell his men to charge, you've almost cleared the mission. Gather up any drops your defeated foes have left behind and then go to mop up the soldiers hiding behind the timber. Behind them is a stone stairway you can use to make your way to some scaffolding. Climb the scaffolding to reach the battlements again. Head toward the tower to rejoin King Foltest and complete the quest.

At the Fore

Join Foltest and his knights in battle against the La Valette soldiers. You won't be in much danger here, but one of the enemies does have a tower shield. Follow Foltest until his way is blocked by a wooden barricade. While his axemen chop it down, prepare yourself to fight in close quarters. Since Geralt's dodging options are limited, this fight can be surprisingly dangerous to you. Prepare yourself to use Yrden or Quen to help you thin the number of enemies quickly. You can conserve your buffs for later battles. Once the battle's done, follow Foltest's men up the ladders.

After the cutscene ends, quickly get Geralt to cover. You might level up here, but you won't have a safe place to meditate to spend your talents. Bring up the Quen sign and activate it, then dodge-roll across the bridge while the Temerian archers give you cover fire. Quickly defeat the La Valette archers stationed at the other side. In addition to the ones behind the wooden blinds, you need to take out the ones standing on a nearby section of scaffolding. You can use Aard here to get some quick kills, by using it to knock soldiers off the edges of the walls. Head toward the top of the tower, where Aryan La Valette and his men are waiting. You can meditate before you approach Aryan, so if you intend to fight him or his men, you should prepare yourself with potions.

Once you enter dialogue with Aryan, he immediately challenges you to a duel and you receive dialogue options. If your response is "As you wish," Geralt immediately enters a pitched battle with Aryan and all his men. This can be a very challenging fight, since this early in the game you have only basic skills at your disposal. If you intend to do this, you should make sure you enter the dialogue fully buffed.

When the fight begins, first focus your energy on taking out all of Aryan's archers, who fire on you from the left edge of the tower. Quen is essential for this phase of the fight. Once the archers are down, focus on eliminating the lightly armored soldiers with Aryan (there are about four). Bombs and traps are invaluable here to act as crowd control and deal damage. Once you've whittled the numbers down to Aryan and his two knights, switch to the Yrden sign. Aryan's knights are probably close to death, so you can finish them off when they set off Yrden or pick them off while Aryan is stunned. Once it's just you and Aryan, you can finish him off with Yrden or simply by blocking and counterattacking.

If you say "Surrender and save your men," you initiate a chain of dialogue options that can lead to a much simpler resolution. Aryan responds to you by giving a speech to his men. After that, if you say "Drop your weapon, fool," Aryan relents and surrenders. This makes it possible for him to survive the Prologue, since you don't fight him.

If you say "Let's settle this between us," Geralt fights Aryan in a one-on-one duel to the death. Aryan hits much harder than any enemy you've faced so far, but he's not especially difficult to beat when you face him alone. You can stagger him with Yrden or simply block and counter his blows as you've done with other armored foes. If you want Aryan to remain dead in your game, but don't want to spend time on the challenging battle against all of his men, take this option.

If you choose to save Aryan, then when Geralt's flashback ends Roche comments that Aryan is also in the La Valette dungeons. If you kill Aryan, Roche comments on his death. At this point, you get another dialogue choice that determines what the next segment of action in flashback will be. You should continue to make your selections in order if you're playing for the first time.

Note that Aryan La Valette being dead is one of the conditions required for Geralt to obtain the Executioner character attribute much later in the game. That said, you can only obtain Executioner if you side with Roche at the end of Chapter 1. If you side with Iorveth, you won't be able to kill the other NPCs who must be dead for the attribute to unlock. If you think you may side with Iorveth, it's best to save Aryan La Valette so you can obtain the Strong Back character attribute instead.

Day of the Assault: Noon

Trial by Fire

After the cutscene ends, quickly use Quen, which helps mitigate damage from the dragon's fire. Wait for the dragon to fly off before you head forward. To pass through the area safely, make sure you stick by King Foltest and Triss as they enter the tunnel to the left side of the bridge. Don't linger in the tunnel too long, as it can catch fire and begin damaging you. Stay as far to the left as you can, as the dragon's fire can damage you through the right side of the tunnel wall when it sweeps over. There are La Valette soldiers to fight here and some may be heavily armored.

Running past them isn't a good idea because they'll follow you. Just keep Quen up and patiently take them out one by one. Foltest, Roche, and Triss will help you. Once you reach the end of one tunnel, pass into the second, then fight the handful of enemies beyond. When Triss freezes the collapsing arch above you, continue forward. Run as quickly as possible across the burning bridge. If you make it through all this without being killed, then you've cleared the quest.

Day of the Assault: Afternoon

To the Temple

This quest lets you explore a large portion of the town around the castle. You can loot an astonishing number of crafting materials and loose orens here just by stepping inside abandoned houses and scanning with your medallion. There's also a fairly lucrative side quest you can trigger. When you're done with looting the town and ready to trigger the side quest, proceed down the left path at the fork at the bottom of the initial winding path that leads into town. A peasant woman flees from a house, just to be cut down by a crossbow bolt to the back. Head into the house to challenge the soldiers who killed her.

Side Quest: Woe to the Vanquished

After you enter the house, speak to the soldiers who are threatening the remaining peasants. This triggers a conversation. As you can see, the dialogue options are all special decisions, so there is a chance of failure no matter what you pick. Since this is the first time you use any of these options (Persuasion, Axii, or Intimidation), none of them will be leveled up. That means the chance of failure you face with each option is basically random. It can be very difficult to progress the quest from this point without a lot of saving and reloading. In fact, you can try an option, fail, reload, then try the exact same option and succeed due to the strong influence randomization has at this point in the game.

Note that if you use Axii successfully here, you can unlock the Conjuror attribute at a usefully early point in the game. Using any of the special decisions successfully levels up the attribute, which levels up further (up to three levels) as you continue to be successful with it. With the attribute at higher levels, it's more likely to work on NPCs, so you should try to succeed in this quest with a special decision type you plan to specialize in later in the game. Usually you can level up Persuasion in addition to Intimidation or Axii, but it's relatively difficult to max out your levels in all three.

If the special decision option you pick succeeds, the soldiers leave peaceably under your influence. From here you can successfully complete the quest. If your special decision option fails, Geralt is forced to look on helplessly as the soldiers mow down the surviving peasants with crossbow bolts. If you attempt to complete the quest after this, the game still considers the quest failed no matter what you do. You can earn a small reward by continuing, but it's not as worthwhile as the reward you get for completing the quest successfully.

If you successfully save the peasants, you get a dialogue option. If you choose "Help comes at a price," you take 10 orens from the peasant and gain 30 experience points. If you say "Take care of yourselves," you gain 50 experience points. In situations like this, experience points are always more valuable than orens. Refusing also opens the door to gaining greater rewards down the line. You can have Geralt play the mercenary if you like, but there's no story payoff for that. You just end up depriving yourself of easy early-game experience points for no reason.

After the cutscene with the peasant, seek out the commander of the Temerian forces in the camp. He's close by; just continue circling down the left-hand path fork you took to reach this particular house. Say "Leave them alone" when you get a dialogue option. At the second dialogue option, say "I won't let you hurt these people." If you take the other dialogue option at either opportunity, the quest abruptly ends.

Defying the commander initiates a brief one-on-one fight with him. He's a heavily armored opponent but easy to defeat, by either blocking his strikes or lunging at him with a heavy attack after he whiffs a blow. When you've reduced him to around a quarter of his HP, the commander surrenders and agrees to leave. Go to the nearby door where the Temerian soldiers were piling wood and rubbish. Open it to free the peasants trapped inside.

Once you're inside, a dialogue begins with them. If you say "I need to be paid," you receive 75 experience points and 20 orens. If you say "Be careful," you receive 100 experience points. At this point, the game tells you the quest is complete, but there will be a lucrative coda to it later on (if you weren't selfish, that is).

To the Temple

Resume heading down the left fork in the road you've been following. Be sure to pick every herb and gather every bit of loot you can from the accessible houses. You can earn a lot of orens and find some very valuable drops if you get lucky on the loot spawns, while the herbs come in handy in a later chapter. As you loot your way down the path, you eventually come to a Temerian soldier fighting off a handful of La Valette soldiers. Help defeat the La Valette soldiers and the Temerian comments that he thought the area was secured.

Go down a little bit farther and suddenly a narrow alley is blocked by a cart. Finish looting the left fork, then circle back around to begin exploring and looting the right fork of town. Toward the end of the right fork, you come to a dead soldier propped up in a short passage. The end of the passage is boarded up, but you can destroy the obstacle with Aard. Pass through to find a new area of town.

Three La Valette soldiers attack you immediately after you emerge from the passage. They're lightly armored, so defeating them should be trivial. Once they're down, loot the area of herbs and items. Most of the doors are locked and you won't be able to open them. When you're through looting this area, walk toward the well that lights up whenever you scan with your medallion. To progress the main plot, climb down into the well. Do not climb down the well before your business in this area is completely finished, because you can never return to it.

Once down in the dungeons, you have your first battles with drowners. These enemies aren't especially difficult and can easily be dispatched without using any potions or sword buffs. If you duck into a room just to the right of where you enter, you can step into a circle of life. When you run across a stone wall that glows orange when scanned, use Aard on it to blast it apart. In the rubble, you find a Temerian sword that's much better than the long sword Geralt is probably using now.

Proceed down the only real path open to you through the sewers. Eventually you come to a narrow passage blocked in by boards. Use Aard to blast a way clear. Be ready to be ambushed by a drowner on the other side. Eventually you reach a room full of torches you can light if you wish. Check all the other iron grates in this area; you can open the one that leads out of this area and toward the quest marker. Climb up the ladder at the end of this area to emerge into the outer temple. Note that you can't come back to this area once you leave.

Once you climb up the ladder, there is a brief cutscene where Geralt spots some Scoia'tael on the distant river bank. You can't do anything about them now, so instead start climbing up the stairs of the tower where you've emerged. When you pass into the next room, three La Valette soldiers ambush you in a very confined space. Even worse, one of them is in full plate. You can meditate and make sure you have potion buffs up before you enter here, or just make sure you've got Quen activated. As long as the ambush doesn't catch you flat-footed, your survival chances are good. After you win the battle, loot the area as you work your way toward a crumbling, vine-covered wall. Climb up the vines to emerge into the monastery's courtyard.

Once in the courtyard, you need to clear out a trio of La Valette soldiers, one carrying a shield. Be careful not to let them surround you on the winding path that leads up from the area entrance, as it can be hard to escape from them here. Try to get past them and into the wide open area at the top of the path. With room to move, you can easily take these three out with little more than Quen or Yrden. Once they're defeated, scour the area for herbs. Before you enter the monastery, meditate, level up, craft some bombs if you need them, and drink some potions. You're about to enter a pair of back-to-back fights that can be dangerous. If you apply potion buffs now, they should last through both battles.

> **Note**
>
> You may find that if you try to meditate right in front of the monastery doors, you can't do it. To meditate, move back toward the area entrance.

Defeat the two soldiers waiting inside the small room. Your buffs should help you do this quickly, despite the confined area. Apply hanged man's venom to your sword, then pass through the next area. Here you find a group of La Valette soldiers waiting for you. This encounter serves as the final battle of this part of the Prologue and can be very dangerous. The courtyard is long and narrow, making it easy for the soldiers to gang up on you. Two of them are lightly armored and should be taken out first. After that, you have to deal with a shield-bearing soldier who tends to attack in tandem with the toughest of the soldiers, a knight in full plate and a huge horned helmet.

Use traps and bombs for crowd control. Keep Quen up to make sure you don't take too much damage early on, when the fight is at its most dangerous. Once you've whittled the soldiers down to the one in the horned helmet, you can duel him using blocks and counterattacks. When you take out the knight in the horned helmet, he drops the gate guard's key. Snag that, then head back into the monastery. You can use the key to open the iron gate. Loot the room beyond, then turn the wheel to lift the portcullis out in the courtyard. Return to the courtyard to greet Foltest and finish the quest.

Day of the Assault: Evening

Blood of His Blood

After the dialogue with Tailles and the archpriest concludes, take a detour before you follow Foltest out to the bridge that leads to the solar. Head toward the entrance to the seclusion labeled on your map. Search this small room for a bit of random loot, then head downstairs into the seclusion itself. In a chest by the bottom of the stairs, you can find some well-balanced silver daggers, a copy of *Nekkers in the Mist*, and the diagram for the superb leather trousers. Scan the rest of the room carefully for random loot and orens.

When you're ready to move on with the storyline, head back up to the main temple level and find Foltest waiting for you at the exit that leads to the bridge. Be ready to hit the onscreen button prompts when directed in order to save Foltest from the dragon. It's also essential that you move away from the dragon as rapidly as possible while staying in a straight line. If you start moving diagonally, the dragon is going to catch up to you and kill you.

The Dungeons of the La Valettes

Now in the present, Geralt's tale is told. The ensuing dialogue scenes can play out in two ways. If you tell Roche "None of your business" after he asks what Geralt would do if he escapes, you get a dialogue branch where you can either say something conciliatory to Roche or become even more hostile. If you select the response "Go fuck yourself," this leads to another dialogue option where you can choose to attack Roche. If Geralt tries to attack Roche, he will die in a cutscene (before the game has technically even begun). This death counts as a Game Over as much as any death in combat, and you'll be forced to reload your last save. If you tell Roche "I can help you get the kingslayer" instead of attacking him, then the rest of the scene plays out normally. Roche decides to leave a key with Geralt so he can "escape" after a quick meal.

Returning Memories

After Geralt has eaten, Roche shows him a file about his death. This triggers some of Geralt's missing memories and initiates the game's other long-running main plot quest. Nothing further that advances the **Returning Memories** quest happens in the Prologue chapter, but there are choices you can make later in the game that can advance it. If you find this plot more interesting than the plot **The Assassins of Kings** follows, you will have opportunities to favor it in your game.

The Dungeons of the La Valettes

This is the final quest you must resolve before the Prologue is concluded. The adventure is pretty straightforward, but what it's like in your game will vary depending on whether or not you killed Aryan La Valette earlier in the chapter and what you did with the **Melitele's Heart** quest (if you initiated it at all).

First, Geralt needs to free himself. There are two ways you can do this. If you're confident in your ability to win fights, you can just have Geralt take his hands out of the manacles. The guards come after him in his cell. You have to fight them both off bare-handed, with Geralt doing minimal damage. It is possible to win this way if you're good at dodging. Upon defeat, one of the guards drops the prison key you need to escape.

If you're not sure you want to fight two guys with no equipment, then try provoking the guards into entering the cell one at a time. This lets you knock one out in a cutscene and then finish off the other in the game's fist-fighting mini-game. The upshot of handling things this way is basically the same; you can take the prison key off one of the defeated guards and then exit your cell.

How you choose to take out this set of guards is unimportant, but after you leave Geralt's cell you have an important decision to make. First, scan the area immediately around you. A nearby weapons rack should highlight orange. Loot it to obtain a small blackjack and some less noteworthy things. From here on out, you need to decide whether you want to play the next sequence stealthily or if you just want to beat all the guards to death.

This decision affects which of two possible cutscenes you trigger in the course of escaping from the dungeons. If you are stealthy, you trigger a cutscene that's not far from the cell where Geralt was kept. If you fight guards openly, you need to descend into the very depths of the dungeon and fight a tense battle before triggering a different, but still necessary, cutscene. After the cutscene, on either route, Geralt encounters NPCs who are necessary for making his escape.

Which NPCs you encounter depends on whether or not you spared Aryan La Valette. If Aryan is alive, you can join up with him after he breaks free of his captors by playing stealthily or rescue him from a sadistic torturer by fighting openly. In both cases, after Aryan is rescued, you must escort him to the castle's oil stores to finish the dungeon sequence and free Geralt.

If Geralt killed Aryan earlier, then you meet up with Baroness Mary Louisa La Valette and Nilfgaardian diplomat Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen in the cutscenes. If you play stealthily, the baroness convinces Shilard to help you sneak out of the dungeons. If you fight your way through the dungeons, you rescue the baroness from the torturer and Shilard chooses to help you escape.

It is possible to trigger the cutscenes involving the torturer by playing stealthily, though there is no particular reason to do this (the cutscenes will be no different than the ones you get by beating all of the guards to death, and your game gets flagged for fighting openly). Likewise, it is only necessary to remain stealthy through the entire dungeon if you wish to get a special line of dialogue from Roche in the cutscene that concludes the quest, and this is only possible if you encounter Mary Louisa and Shilard. After you've rescued Aryan La Valette in the stealth-triggered cutscene, you can begin beating the guards to death and nothing else about the sequence changes. It is not possible to get Roche's stealth-only dialogue if you rescue Aryan, due to the way the quest concludes.

In terms of difficulty, it is much harder to remain stealthy throughout the entire dungeon escape sequence than it is to just kill all of the guards. If even a single guard notices you during the stealth sequence, that flags your game for fighting openly since you won't be able to get past him without beating him to death. The best way to do it is to save every time you make it past a guard, then reload your last save immediately if a guard notices you.

If you are a player obsessed with amassing huge piles of loot in RPGs, then you are going to find the open fighting route much preferable to the stealth route. When you fight openly, you can take your time looting the many areas of the dungeon, where orens, crafting materials, and other goodies spawn. The torturer also drops the diagram for a trap called the clawer.

Instructions for completing the dungeon escape both ways follow. The instructions for a stealthy escape include instructions for if you've rescued Aryan, as he finishes the sequence a bit differently than his mother does. Instructions for finding and fighting the torturer are included in the instructions for finishing the sequence through open combat. To repeat; you can trigger the torture room scene by defeating enemies stealthily, but there is nothing to be gained by doing things this way.

If You Choose Stealth

The only way to defeat the guards without killing them is to sneak behind them and stun them by tapping your strong attack button when the stun prompt appears onscreen. Once stunned, a guard remains unconscious for the rest of this sequence. You can loot a guard's area once he is defeated, but be careful. If Geralt ever crosses any guard's line of sight, he's discovered and your game automatically sets the cutscene triggers relating to open combat. Always save after you successfully stun a guard, and reload immediately if you're spotted.

If you're focusing on stealth, it's best not to loot an area until you've also stunned the guards that patrol its adjacent areas. If you're uncertain whether it's safe to loot an area yet, err on the side of caution and leave the loot behind. There's nothing in the dungeon that you'll absolutely need later in the game.

Getting through the stealth section is completely dependent on using Geralt's ability to put out torches through use of his Igni sign. Just press the interaction button when you're within range of a torch to put it out. Extinguishing torches reduces the guards' line of sight and makes it possible for Geralt to sneak into safe places where he can ambush the guards. This is the basic method used for getting through the stealth sequence successfully. You simply need to learn the position you need to be in for stunning each guard. Consult the map whenever the written directions seem unclear.

Once Geralt says "Damn torches," your game is flagged for stealth mode. Immediately put out the torch near your cell's door. Creep forward up the stairs. Open the door and quickly duck into the cell immediately at your left. The guard will come to investigate, but won't see you if you lean against the wall to the left of the door. You should be able to lure the guard toward you by moving slightly out of the cell, then leaning back up against the wall. When the guard comes back on his patrol, he should pause just in front of the entrance to the cell you're in. Step behind him and stun him when the strong attack button prompt appears. After you've successfully stunned him, save your game.

The next segment is tricky. Proceed toward the stairs, putting out torches. You cannot stand openly in the stairwell, as eventually a guard is going to see you. Instead, you want to move up the stairs and duck behind a wall that's just before a room that branches off to your left. A guard patrols here, talking to himself, moving from the entrance to an area farther down in the room. You can stun him when he turns around after examining the entranceway. He won't stand still for long, so you may need to stun him while he's moving.

Part of what makes this tricky is that there is a second guard patrolling a chamber just beyond the next who can see you if you stun the first guard while he's within line of sight. It can be difficult to know the second guard's position before stunning the first guard. Try leaning up against the left side of the doorway and positioning the camera so you can see the hall that leads out of the next room. You should eventually be able to track the second guard's movements by his torch when it passes back and forth.

If you can stun the first guard without being spotted, put out the torches and then duck into an empty cell on the left, just like the last one you hid in. From this hiding space, you can hear some amusing dialogue from the prisoners in the cell across from you. Keep peeking at the distant hallway to track the second guard's patrol cycle. When he's moving away from you, dash into the room and extinguish a torch at the end of the room, on the left. This causes the prisoner nearby to call for the guards, which is exactly what you want. Dash back into your hiding place in the left-hand cell and wait.

At the prisoner's cries, the second guard returns to the room. Listen to their dialogue. The guard relights the torch you extinguished, then exits. Now you can extinguish that torch one more time, but the prisoner won't call on the guard this time. Save your game and begin edging into the next room. Use the small group of barrels to the left for cover. During his patrol cycle, the guard pauses in the upper-left corner of the room. This is your chance to run up behind him and stun him. You can safely loot the next room, as all the guards in the area are out cold. When you approach the doorway, you trigger a cutscene.

If Aryan La Valette is alive, this is the only cutscene you can trigger through stealth, and for the rest of the dungeon you can fight openly if you prefer. Read on to proceed along this sequence of events. If Aryan La Valette is dead, then you get to see a cutscene involving Mary Louisa La Valette and Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen.

If Aryan Is Alive

Note that completing this sequence with Aryan La Valette alive gives Geralt the Strong Back attribute, which is obscenely useful later on in the game because it increases Geralt's maximum encumbrance. It is arguable that saving Aryan is always the better choice simply because doing so gives you Strong Back. In addition to that, though, if you save Aryan you get to meet him again in Chapter 3.

To end the sequence, you need to escort him toward the dungeon's stores of oil. They won't be far away from this location—just head up the stairway to the immediate left of the entrance. Aryan is recovering from torture and unable to walk without your aid, so he needs you to clear the way. Leave him resting in front of the door he bursts out of, and continue to explore until you find the oil stores. You can pass through the door Aryan burst out of to reach the lower dungeon area where the torture chamber lies, but there's no need to go there.

If you go down there anyway, you find yourself in a battle with the executioner and the scribe. The scribe can be taken out with a few blows, but the executioner is fairly tough if you fight him with the small blackjack. If you want to do this battle, it's best to make sure you pick up the club that you can get on the upper level before descending into the torture chamber. Keep Quen up and battle the executioner as you would other shield-bearing opponents, with blocks and counters. After a battle with the executioner, you can read Aryan's "confession" in the lower chamber and pick up some (probably) great loot. You can also use this to get the diagram of the clawer trap.

If you really enjoy the stealth gameplay, you can use the basic techniques outlined above to stealthily take out the guards you encounter along the way out. Simply stand beneath the first guard's line of sight, then stun him and put out the three torches nearby. Take the path to the right and try to lure the guard toward the unlit torch by making a bit of noise. When the guard stands before the torch to relight it, walk up behind him and stun him.

Peek through the barrels to view the second guard nearest you on the opposite side. There is also a third guard you can't see from this vantage point. To observe him, move down the small hall to the doorway that leads into the area you were just observing. Once you have a solid idea of both guards' positions, put out all of the torches nearby. Wait until the second guard's back is turned, then put out the torch on the far side of the arch near the barrels. Creep into the small tunnel that's just past the arch, putting out all of the torches around you. When the third guard comes to the end of his patrol, you can come up behind him and stun him. Head to the end of the hall the third guard patrolled and put out all of the torches. To get the fourth guard, creep toward the torch that burns in the hallway that branches off to your left. You can stun the final guard when he goes to relight it.

That said, you should find the club once you move forward, so you're not really expected to handle the rest of the sequence stealthily. It's also quite difficult, since the guards in the oil storeroom are packed closely together. Feel free to simply fight your way to the oil stores if you wish. Note that if you do, you fight a lot more than four guards before all's said and done. You should have little trouble quickly beating down foes with the club equipped, provided you also use your signs.

Once the way to the oil stores is cleared, backtrack and pick up Aryan. Make sure you've looted everything from the dungeon you want to obtain. Pick Aryan up using the interact button and slowly escort him toward the oil stores. Once you take him into the room a cutscene triggers. When the cutscene finishes, Geralt can proceed out of the dungeon through a secret tunnel. Pause by the exit to pick up the sword in the weapons rack and equip it.

If Aryan Is Dead

Enter the door that Shilard and the baroness passed through in the cutscene. If you want to stealthily defeat all of the guards, do not stray from this path. You want to work your way toward the dungeon's exit, which is very nearby on this floor. First, duck into the passage to the left to obtain and equip the club. The first guard is at the top of the stairwell to your right. As long as you are below his line of sight, he won't see you. Wait until he turns his back to the stairwell, then stun him. Save your game.

Put out the torch to your left, then the one to your right. Sneak down the right hallway and lean against the center wall. Position the camera so you can see around the corner. When the guard here completes his walk cycle and waves his torch slowly to examine the area, wait just out of sight. When he turns to begin walking down the opposite hallway, follow and stun him. You can try to lure this guard toward unlit torches to set up a less dangerous chance to stun him, but his behavior here is inconsistent. Sometimes he'll show you his back while he relights a torch, while other times he will ignore the unlit torches.

Peek through the barrels to view the guard on the opposite side. Put out all of the torches nearby. Wait until the next guard's back is turned, then put out the torch on the far side of the arch. Creep into the tunnel that lies beyond the arch, putting out all of the torches around you. Use the barrels for cover. When the third guard comes to the end of his patrol near the second set of barrels, you can come up behind him and stun him. Save your game.

Head to the end of the hall the third guard patrolled and put out all of the torches. To get the fourth guard, creep toward the torch that burns in the hallway that branches off to your left. Extinguish it and then crouch by the barrels nearby. You can stun the final guard when he goes to relight it, which he'll do fairly consistently. If you get lucky, you can get the stun prompt without even moving Geralt out of cover. Once the fourth guard is stunned, you can move toward the quest marker at your leisure.

To exit on this route, you must follow Shilard when he leaves the room and heads toward the main exit. Put out the torches and crouch by the barrels until the guard leaves, then pass through the opened gate. It swings shut behind you. In this route, you find the sword sitting on a weapons rack near the door.

If You Choose Combat

After you leave the dungeon, slowly begin sweeping it for guards and treasure. If you opt for the open combat route, you need to rely on your signs. Quen is particularly useful here, as sometimes you can fight three or four guards at once in close quarters. It takes more hits to defeat the guards when you're armed with only the small blackjack, but you can take them out by using dodge rolls to escape when surrounded. Otherwise, pick off individual guards as you normally would. If you discover any armor while looting the dungeon, equip it.

After defeating a couple of guards, you reach the top of the stairs nearby. There should be a locked door in front of you. Work your way to the right, where you ascend a second set of stairs There's a pair of guards in the chamber at the top you can defeat to obtain a rusty key. You can use the rusty key to unlock the locked door you found previously. Beyond the locked door is a trap door that lets you drop into a lower level of the dungeon. Search the area carefully once you've entered the dungeon's lower level. Proceed down the passage, leaping over a short wall as you go. A room nearby contains the guisarme, the strongest weapon you can obtain in the dungeons. Equip it to prepare for the battle ahead of you. Proceed down the dungeon corridor until you come to a crack in the wall. Peek through it to watch a grisly cutscene of an NPC being tortured. You can stop watching once the cutscene begins to loop itself.

Head a little ways down the corridor and look for a gap in the wall, something like a window. You may need to tilt your camera up to see it. You can climb into this gap and get into the torture chamber. Beat down the scribe watching events to get the executioner's attention. The executioner immediately grabs a shield and a heavy sword to duel you. You can defeat the executioner the way you defeat other foes with shields, by blocking his blows to stagger him and then counterattacking. You also need to stun or defeat the scribe here. Once you defeat the executioner, you can loot the room and pick up the diagram of the clawer trap that the executioner drops. When you're finished, speak to the NPC. How you proceed from here depends on which NPC you rescued.

If Aryan Is Alive

Aryan needs to be escorted to the dungeon's oil stores to provide a way out for himself and Geralt. Due to how he's been tortured, though, he can't walk without your aid. What is generally easiest is to leave Aryan in the torture chamber, then go back to the first floor. You should use the door Geralt and Aryan are facing after the cutscene. Take the staircase that you find in the first door to the right of the torture chamber's exit. Finish off the remaining guards. Loot the area thoroughly, then return to pick up Aryan and escort him carefully to the oil stored in the upper room's barrels. Once you take him into the correct room a cutscene triggers. When the cutscene finishes, Geralt can proceed out of the dungeon through a secret tunnel. Pause by the exit to pick up the sword in the weapons rack.

If Aryan Is Dead

After you speak with Mary Louisa, Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen and a detachment of Nilfgaardian troops enter the torture chamber. He gives you instructions for leaving the prison that you should be careful to follow. Use the exit from the torture chamber that leads back to the upper level, then head up the stairwell to the right. Shilard takes guards and exits through the main exit.

Once he's gone, have Geralt fight his way toward the main exit. After Shilard passes through, it's unlocked and you can pass through freely once all the guards are defeated. Be careful to use your signs here, as you're going to be fighting roughly seven guards at once. After you defeat them, open the iron grate. Be sure to pick up the sword waiting for you on the weapons rack in the next room.

After the Escape

Side Quest: Melitele's Heart

If you saved Newboy's life earlier, then stepping out of the dungeon triggers a cutscene with him. If you ask him about the Scoia'tael ambush, he gives you the book *About Dragons*. When you need to move on, Newboy offers to distract the sentries. He goes up the stairs and leads them away from the docks. If you already have Newboy's talisman, you can simply let him go and head down to the boat. If you saved Newboy's life but didn't take his amulet, you need to fight and kill Newboy before he departs, then loot Newboy's talisman off his corpse in order to progress **Melitele's Heart** in a later chapter. If you let Newboy die, you may stumble across his body somewhere on the docks.

If you didn't trigger the **Melitele's Heart** side quest earlier in the game (or if you let Newboy die), you're going to have to fight your way from the dungeon's exit to the boat, where Triss and Roche are waiting for you. Note that if you escaped with Aryan dead, you emerge to the left of the docks. If Aryan is alive, you emerge to the right. Equip the sword you found just before leaving the dungeon if you don't have the guisarme. Head up the stairway near Geralt when you're ready to proceed. Triss joins in the fight with you, so you may want to have Quen up to help prevent her from accidentally setting you on fire.

You should have little trouble taking out the guards, even as poorly equipped as you are in this battle. Focus on using light attacks and dodging, so you can get out of the way when Triss joins in. Once the guards are defeated, follow Triss down to the boat to sail away from La Valette castle and trigger the Prologue's end-of-chapter cutscene. At the beginning of Chapter 1, the game gives back to you all the items you acquired earlier in addition to letting you keep all the loot you found in the dungeons.

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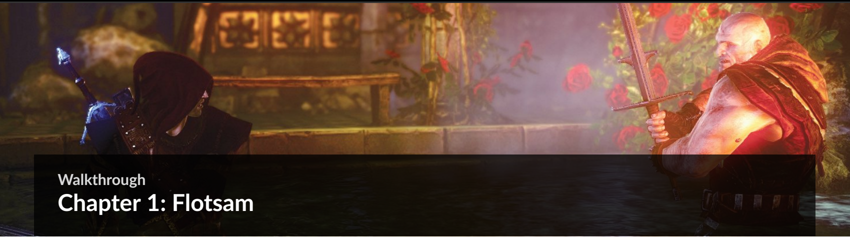

Walkthrough

Chapter 1: Flotsam

A Rough Landing

After the cutscenes end, you begin the chapter on Vernon Roche's boat. Search the boat before you leave (ignore the NPC complaints) to turn up a quilted leather. Leap onto shore and search immediately nearby to find a circle of life. Search the area near the boat to find the diagram of the witcher's silver sword in a chest. There's also going to be random loot in the various crates and barrels nearby. Follow Triss and Roche and listen to their dialogue. You can take time to loot herbs from the sides of the path as you go. When you hear the sound of a flute, you meet Iorveth and trigger the next plot point.

During the cutscene, you can make a timed decision while in conversation with Iorveth. None of the decisions you make here can really change the way the quest plays out. Eventually, Geralt announces that he knows Iorveth has archers hidden in the bushes and Iorveth orders them to attack. During a cutscene, Triss casts a shielding spell. After the cutscene ends, Roche begins carrying her down the forest path. Follow Roche and be sure to stay within Triss's orange energy shield. If you step outside of the shield, you're vulnerable to attack by archers. After this sequence, you get the useful Cover attribute.

To finish this quest, you just need to protect Roche and Triss from Scoia'tael attackers while they slowly move toward the town. You shouldn't find this difficult provided you don't step outside of the shield. The Scoia'tael have to draw their swords and fight at melee range if they come inside the energy shield. They're lightly armored and you can easily defeat them with simple light attack combos. If you found a rake or shovel during the Prologue, its knockdown and stun effects can be very useful here. You'll pass by an area where a circle of strength is located, but it's not worth your time to try and activate it. Once you draw close enough to Flotsam that you hear guards shouting about Scoia'tael attacks, you've essentially finished the quest. After one more cutscene at the town gates, you'll be ready to move on.

Before you begin the next main quest, though, you may want to backtrack instead of following Triss and Roche into town. If you go back, you can pick up the loot dropped from the various Scoia'tael you defeated. Note that it's not worth doing this if you're getting close to your encumbrance limit, since Scoia'tael consistently drop swords of the Blue Mountains upon defeat. A half dozen of those can easily overload Geralt if you went nuts gathering loot in the previous chapter or if you don't have Strong Back.

By the Gods—Stringing Up Sods

It's possible to begin exploring Flotsam at this point, but you can't really do anything in the town square until you take care of this quest. So for now, just head directly toward the town square. The townsfolk are psyched up about a public hanging that's about to take place.

Once you arrive, Geralt discovers that his old friends Zoltan and Dandelion are on the platform. As a further complication, Dandelion turns out to be the agent that Roche sailed to the Flotsam area to meet in the first place. Your goal is to find a way to save them. There's no real way to do that save by taking out the executioner in a fistfight. There are two ways to approach that goal.

The first and most straightforward way is to have Geralt approach the scaffold and begin a conversation with one of the guards. If you pick the lower option at any point in the dialogue tree, Geralt decides to just wade in and beat the living hell out of the two guards. You enter the fistfighting mini-game and will have to defeat both of the guards at the base of the scaffold, followed by the executioner. Roche may soften up the second guard for you before that fight begins.

If you pick the upper options in the dialogue tree consistently, you can rally the crowd behind Geralt. Margot the prostitute begins insulting the guard, eventually enraging him so much that he attacks Geralt. If you defeat this guard in a fistfight, the second guard is defeated automatically by the angry mob. Geralt can then scale the scaffold automatically to begin battling the executioner.

There's also a sneakier way to complete this mission. After the first cutscene in the sequence, head toward the inn instead of approaching the guard. To the left of the inn, a door leads to the harbor area. Pass through this door. On the other side, a guard stands off to Geralt's right. You want to distract him.

Head down to a dock that's just below the one the guard stands on. Approach some barrels off to Geralt's right. Drawing near to them should give you a prompt to use Aard on the barrels by tapping the interaction button. Do this. The noise created by the barrels exploding distracts the guard on the upper dock. Head up to the upper dock yourself and wait for the guard to descend to the lower dock.

Now you can walk down the section of the upper dock that the guard was blocking previously. This leads to a door that opens onto the town square, on the right side of the inn. From this door approach the scaffold from behind. Once you're close enough, you get a prompt to climb up onto the scaffold. This automatically triggers a fistfight with the executioner but lets you bypass fistfighting the two guards entirely.

Note that you usually can't get behind the scaffold without distracting the guard on the docks. If you try, you will probably trigger the same conversation that happens when you approach the guards directly. Even if you somehow manage it, climbing up onto the scaffold without distracting the guard on the docks causes the fistfight sequence with the two guards to begin automatically.

So is there any advantage to taking out the executioner in a particular way? Well, successfully distracting the guard on the docks is worth 150 bonus XP, while just beating up the guards doesn't reward you with anything in particular. It also takes longer than just beating up the executioner, who is a poorer fighter than either of the two guards. Finally, fighting all three guards increases your chances of losing one of the fistfights, which causes Geralt and his friends to die automatically in a cutscene. Overall, it's best to resolve this quest the sneaky way.

After you've rescued Zoltan and Dandelion, follow them into the local inn. You should find them sitting on the upper level with Triss. Strike up a conversation with the three of them and ask whatever questions interest you. At the end of the conversation, you complete the quest. Another main quest triggers automatically, and Triss heads out into the Flotsam harbor.

The Town Guard

When Geralt uses a sign, he automatically draws his sword. At this point in the game, that's basically harmless. You won't be able to resolve this quest through combat, so any attempts to attack NPCs will be unsuccessful anyway. After you've completed this quest, though, you probably want to sheathe Geralt's sword as quickly as you can if you have to draw it while in Flotsam's town square.

Usually, if you linger in the town square too long with your sword drawn, you attract hostile attention from the guards. If you keep your sword out long enough, around seven of them swarm in to attack you. It's actually possible to win a battle with the massed guards, and if you do, you can then walk around the Flotsam town square with your sword out as much as you like. It may seem impossible to defeat the town guard at first, but there's actually a very easy way to do it: Just make sure you pick the fight while Triss or Roche is nearby.

Triss and Roche always fight on Geralt's side if they're in the area when combat starts. They're also very powerful compared to a typical enemy at this point in the game. If you can get Triss or Roche to join Geralt in the fight, then you can simply take out the lightly armored town guards by rolling around, using light attacks, and keeping Quen up for defense. The NPCs will divert the guards' attention but shouldn't be in any danger of dying.

It's even possible to defeat the guards without getting one of your NPC allies to join you, even if you're still using Geralt's starting equipment. Just keep Quen up, roll around to make sure you don't get surrounded, and use light attacks to keep isolated guards locked up in hit-stun. Make sure you don't let the guards carrying pikes get within striking range of you while you're attacking someone else. Basically, if you could beat Aryan La Valette and his men in the Prologue, you can probably waste the Flotsam town guard.

There's no reason to actually do this, though. You get very little experience for defeating the town guards (only about 5 XP per guard) despite how long it takes to kill them. You don't get any cool item drops. The only in-game acknowledgment you get is a cutscene where the guards demand a fine of 200 orens. If you refuse to pay, you automatically die in the ensuing cutscene. Really, it's easier for everyone if you just remember to sheathe your sword when you're in town. Even when traveling through areas outside the town square, walking around with your sword drawn upsets NPCs. This doesn't make it impossible to progress through the game, but the screaming gets a bit annoying after a while.

The Kayran

It's time to go join Triss on the docks. You can proceed directly from the inn to the Flotsam harbor area by exiting through the rear door. Head toward point 60, The Kayran (Quest), on the Flotsam map in the guide. It shouldn't be far out on the main dock. Walk past Triss when you get there and strike up a conversation with the gathered peasants. This is your introduction to the sorceress Síle de Tansarville.

The belligerent peasant is going to try to pick a fight with you if you ignore him or if you attempt to intimidate him and fail. The fight is basically a fistfighting mini-game and you should have absolutely no problems winning these by now. Once the peasant goes down, Louis Merse appears to offer Geralt a chance at killing the big tentacled monster menacing Flotsam's waterfront, the kayran. Síle agrees to make it a joint effort and mentions that Cedric the elf might know more about how to pick off the kayran. We'll come back to the task of killing the kayran later.

For now, it's enough that we know Geralt has to kill one. Head to Lobinden now, so you can talk to Cedric and make him available as both merchant and craftsman. After the cutscene at the town gate ends, follow Triss up to Cedric's observation tower. Talk to Cedric. All of the conversation options are at least interesting, but you want to make sure you ask about the kayran and witchers' work, and tell him that you hunt monsters. If you're interested in lore, be sure to ask him about Moril.

After you're finished talking to Cedric, Triss teleports away. You'll meet up with her again later. For now, head back into town. You've got a few other things to do before you're ready to start adventuring in the woods.

Flotsam

Once you've completed the initial part of **The Kayran**, you can begin exploring Flotsam, the game's first town. Although finishing **By the Gods** triggers another main quest, **Indecent Proposal**, this guide recommends taking a break from questing right now so you can get your bearings. Flotsam is not meant to be an especially large city, but it's the first really enormous explorable environment you see in this game.

You can score tons of random loot, including some very rare items, by exploring each building you can enter and scanning everywhere with your medallion. You can also stock up on many herbs that grow wild within the city's walls. Flotsam is broken up into districts, just as real medieval towns were, so we'll go over the various interesting things you can see and do in Flotsam by going through the town district by district. Note that while you explore, you may trigger some quests or advance some of the chapter's major quests a little automatically. Don't worry about this for now; you won't be able to do anything to screw yourself out of something you might want to do later on.

Town Square

The Inn

The most important feature of the Flotsam town square is the inn, mainly for reasons having to do with the game's encumbrance system. Everything Geralt has equipped counts toward his maximum encumbrance, as well as things that are just sitting in his inventory, like crafting materials, traps, and junk. When Geralt is overly encumbered, he can't fight well and walks slowly. Once he's over his encumbrance limit, you want to either go find a merchant and sell off any junk you're carrying or put anything useful and particularly heavy into storage until you need it.

As it happens, Geralt's storage is always going to be located at a town's inn. Items placed in storage can be accessed in later chapters, even though you're visiting different inns in other parts of the world. This makes storage a good way to set aside items you don't need now but plan to use in later chapters. In the Flotsam town inn, you access storage by descending to the second level and either speaking to Dyson Beaver or standing near the chest near the right side of Dyson's counter. It's best to keep crafting materials that tend to be heavy in storage, like iron ore, timber, and cloth. In addition to storing your extra stuff, Dyson Beaver is one of four merchants who do business in the inn at all hours.

Inn Merchants

Lyudmila

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Sunshine

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Dyson Beaver

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Marty Beaver

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

As you can see, the merchants who operate at the inn all sell junk, and overpriced junk at that. You're never going to be in a position where you want to buy something from them. You will find them useful for quickly selling off heavy items like looted equipment that's not worth keeping around. Something you'll notice when you sell things to these merchants (and others in the game) is that the sold item immediately appears in their inventory. This means that you can buy it back, provided you don't let too much time pass.

You will also notice that Geralt's sell prices are a small fraction of the price most merchants will charge for an item once it's in their inventory. In general, merchant items in *The Witcher 2* are sold at extremely high markup. This means that anything you need that you can acquire for free, whether as quest loot or through exploration, is well worth your time to obtain. While all merchants buy Geralt's used items for the same amount of orens for items, they tend to sell things at rates that can vary. You can further manipulate merchant rates by obtaining the Haggling attribute later in this chapter. .

Most of the merchants in Flotsam happen to charge the same markup, but there's one merchant who doesn't. It's a good idea to go see what a town's merchants have in stock and how their prices compare first thing when you come to a new town area. There are relatively few ways to acquire lots of orens in *The Witcher 2*, so be as frugal as you can when it comes to managing your money.

When you aren't using the inn for item management, you can also use it to play mini-games and to visit the brothel. You can find arm-wrestlers on the inn's upper level. On the lower level, you can find fistfighting and dice poker. There are side quests associated with playing these mini-games that we'll cover later.

The Brothel

If you descend to the inn's lower level and exit through the door opposite the stairwell, you can enter the brothel. At the brothel, Geralt can offer one of the prostitutes a certain sum of orens in exchange for a night of passion. Each of the prostitutes has an offer range, and Geralt must offer above her minimum or she'll refuse him. The amount you must offer a given prostitute at any given time is determined semi-randomly, much like the success chances of influencing an NPC by using a sign or intimidation. Generally, you need to offer at least 50 percent of a prostitute's maximum value to get her to accept Geralt's offer.

While you do get to see a love scene depicting Geralt's sexy funtimes with his lady of choice once you make a successful offer, there is no other benefit to sleeping with a prostitute. She won't restore your health or offer you any other benefit later on in the game. The brothel is basically just a way of making Geralt's orens disappear (much like real-world escort services). It's worth noting that almost any offer high enough to be accepted by a prostitute would buy you something far more useful from one of the town's merchants.

When you visit the lower level of the inn in Flotsam, you sometimes overhear a drunken town guard singing by the stairwell. The guard is actually singing a bawdy old song called "As Oyster Nan Stood by Her Tub." You can look up the lyrics online.

Above the inn is the residence of the visiting sorceress, Síle de Tansarville, and a few of the brothel's other employees. Inside the inn is usually where you'll find NPCs friendly to Geralt during this chapter of the game: Triss, Roche, Dandelion, and Zoltan. The only times they won't be in the inn is when progressing a quest causes them to travel to another location.

Guard House

To the right of the inn is the Flotsam guard house. The main point of interest here, besides vast amounts of loot, is a couple of training dummies upstairs. You can knock these down to help qualify Geralt for the Experienced attribute. You need to be quick about knocking these over, though, as seeing you with your sword out is going to make the guards nearby hostile. You can reset their hostility by taking a few swings, sheathing your sword, and then taking a few more.

Louis Merse

Across from the inn is the office of Louis Merse, Flotsam's royal burgomaster. He pays Geralt for completing certain side quests and also controls the Royal Mail in Flotsam (which is relevant to yet another quest). You can also drag an astonishingly high quantity of loot out of his house and office.

Between the guard post and Merse's office is one of the exits leading out of town. This particular one passes through a small walled area and another door to emerge in the village of Lobinden. There are two training dummies in this area that you can knock over with impunity (since the guards here are always asleep).

Blue Stripes Headquarters

Finally, to the left of the inn, up a staircase, is the entrance to the Blue Stripes headquarters. For now, you can simply loot the place, but after you finish **Indecent Exposure**, you can come back here to find Roche's assistant, Ves, and begin a minor but hilarious side quest.

Town Square Merchants

Fioravanti

Item	Price	Item	Price
Diagram: Solid Cloth	251	Formula: Maribor Forest	152
Diagram: Hardened Leather	251	Formula: Red Haze	84
Diagram: Studded Leather	276	Diamond Dust	29
Diagram: Elemental Stone	214	Amethyst Dust	22
Diagram: Oil	126	Cloth	20
Diagram: Essence of Water	226	Robust Cloth	32
Diagram: Diamond Dust	314	Leather	20
Formula: Tiara	84	Hardened Leather	26
Formula: Gadwall	139	Studded Leather	39

Formula: Thunderbolt	125	Diagram: Leather	176
Formula: White Raffard's Decoction	97	Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264
Formula: Hanged Man's Venom	90	Oil	14
Formula: Arachnid Oil	104	Essence of Water	14
Formula: Lapwing	139		

Fioravanti conducts business in front of Louis Merse's office during daylight hours. Many of the diagrams he sells can be bought from the Mysterious Merchant at a much more reasonable price. You can also find most of the crafting components he sells as random loot if you scour Flotsam carefully, or simply craft them yourself at a more economical rate. The main things of interest among Fioravanti's wares are his formulas. Buying all of them can be prohibitively expensive, so stick to buying things that you're pretty sure you'll use regularly.

Vilmos Bartok

Item	Price	Item	Price
Formula: Whirl	207	Diagram: Leather	176
Formula: Brock	104	Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264
Formula: Virga	104	Oil	14
Formula: Stammelford's Philtre	207	Balisse	11
Formula: Maribor Forest	152	White Myrtle Petals	12
Diamond Dust	29	Celandine	10
Amethyst Dust	22	Wolfsbane	15
Cloth	20	Scleroderm	14
Robust Cloth	32	Cortinarius	16
Leather	20	Bryonia	24
Hardened Leather	26	Mandrake Root	20
Studded Leather	39	Verbena	24

Vilmos Bartok's shop is tucked between the inn and the guard post. It's open during daylight hours. He sells a variety of herbs and crafting components that you're best off getting in other ways. That said, he does sell some formulas that otherwise can't be obtained in this chapter. Again, just buying them all is prohibitively expensive, so look up what the formulas let you make and try to pick up ones that you're certain you'll want to use in the future.

Points of Interest

If you completed the quest **Woe to the Vanquished** in the Prologue and refused to take any payment from the peasants, you can encounter the peasant family you saved here in the Flotsam town square. Approach the building directly across from the entrance to the Blue Stripes headquarters, near the wooden door that leads to the Craftsman's District. This automatically triggers a cutscene where the peasant family approaches Geralt and offers him 50 orens, a reinforced leather enhancement, and the diagram of the heavy leather jacket in a display of gratitude. Whether you accept this offer or refuse it results in slightly different text in Geralt's in-game journal. There's no XP bonus for refusing the reward this time, so it's more lucrative to accept.

Just beneath the staircase to the entrance to the Blue Stripes headquarters is a randomly named NPC. Have Geralt approach the NPC and strike up a conversation. Listen to the message, then accept the package you're offered. It contains the book *The Arachas—A Study* and formulas for dancing star and dragon's dream bombs. All of these items can be very useful to you in resolving future quests.

Near the entrance to the Nonhuman District (just to the right of Merse's office), there's a pair of NPCs speaking together in hushed tones about you. Approach them and begin a conversation to trigger a cutscene. The NPCs say that they're scientists testing the long-term effects of a new substance and want to know if you're interested. You can turn them down, but if you accept their offer they give you a free critical effects mutagen.

The first time you try to exit the town square through the archway into the Craftsman's District, you're going to be attacked by three bandits. You can attack them freely, but just make sure you don't accidentally set foot back in the town square during the fight. The bandits aren't heavily armored, so you should be able to put two of them down with light attacks and maybe Quen for extra defense. The lead bandit carries a shield, so you can handle him by blocking and countering. The lead bandit drops an arrest warrant upon defeat.

Harbor

The Flotsam harbor area begins to the north of the inn and extends along the entire north side of the town, adjacent to the Craftsman's District. The main thing you can do here is, well, pull lots of random loot off of cargo. You visit this area a few times as part of certain main quests later in the game. The dock farthest to the west leads to the prison barge.

Past the dock area, in a wooded area just beyond, is a bloodstained cave entrance. This cave is infested with nekkers, so you don't want to visit just yet. You'll come to this area at least once later in the game, though.

Craftsman's District

Mysterious Merchant

Item	Price	Item	Price
Diagram: Solid Cloth	176	Robust Cutlass	313
Diagram: Hardened Leather	176	Robust Witcher's Silver Sword	267
Diagram: Studded Leather	194	Shiadhal's Armor	673
Diagram: Elemental Stone	150	Sun Rune	264
Diagram: Oil	89	Ysgith Rune	351
Diagram: Leather	124	Earth Rune	176
Diagram: Essence of Water	159	Moon Rune	264
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	185	Fire Rune	351
Diagram: Diamond Dust	220		

The main feature of note in the Craftsman's District, besides areas to loot, is the Mysterious Merchant. He sells items at a rate that's about 30 percent cheaper than the other Flotsam merchants, including some very powerful (if not optimal) weapons and armor. He also does business at all hours. If you want to invest money in getting diagrams for crafting materials, you'll get the best buy from him. It's worth noting that he's the only merchant in this chapter who sells runes, though you don't want to buy any from him until you have better swords.

Nonhuman District

The Nonhuman District runs along Flotsam's south wall. Its main point of interest, besides a pair of important merchants, is an exit that leads into the forest. There are two training dummies to knock over here, in a courtyard just before the main exit. This exit isn't as well-guarded as the one that leads to Lobinden, so you're very likely to encounter nekkers and endregas roaming the area only a few paces from the city's walls. At night, you often encounter Scoia'tael enemies lurking in the area, too.

Being Experienced

If you've knocked down the five training dummies at Foltest's camp during the Prologue, the two at the guard house, and the two at the gate near the guard house, then you should get the Experienced attribute here by knocking one of the dummies down. If you've missed some training dummies, don't worry about it. It's possible to miss every training dummy up to this point and still find enough later in the game to get Experienced. That said, if you're trying to unlock this attribute, it's more useful the earlier in the game you get it.

Deflecting Arrows

Fighting Scoia'tael in this chapter is an ideal way to try to earn the Batter character attribute, which gives you a 20 percent chance of an instant kill with a deflected arrow. The best way to do this is to invest two talents in the Arrow Redirection skill in the Training talent tree, then go out at night to see if there are any Scoia'tael around. When you find a group, try to pick their numbers down to one or two. Keep your distance from the survivor and begin deflecting arrows by guarding. You earn Batter once you've successfully deflected around 10 arrows. Once you have Batter, try getting an instant kill with a deflected arrow to get the Ricochet achievement.

While you roam the Nonhuman District, keep your eyes peeled for a pair of elven women named Miranda and Carrie who seem to talk about shoes and fashion an awful lot. Yes, they're named after the Miranda and Carrie from *Sex and the City*. You can even go into their house and find an astonishing number of pairs of shoes.

Berthold Candeleria

Craftsman

Item	Price	Item	Price
Temerian Sword	376	Iron Ore	20
Diagram: Sun Rune	439	Silver Ore	45
Diagram: Ysgith Rune	439	Superb Well-Balanced Dagger	76
Diagram: Earth Rune	439	Well-Balanced Dagger	39
Diagram: Moon Rune	439	Rusty Well-Balanced Dagger	26
Diagram: Fire Rune	564	Long Sword	284
Diagram: Sword of Caingorn	89	Diagram: Robust Cutlass	164
Diagram: Temerian Steel Sword	89	Diagram: Blue Meteorite Ore	301
Diagram: Short Sword	101	Diagram: Red Meteorite Ore	239
Diagram: Jagged Blade	339	Diagram: Yellow Meteorite Ore	239
Diagram: Well-Balanced Dagger	89	Silver-Plated Sword	304
Short Sword	226	Robust Leather Reinforcement	33

Berthold is probably the most important of the three merchants/craftsmen you can deal with in this chapter. He does business from noon to dusk, so don't show up looking for him at dawn. Berthold sells diagrams that let you make runes and manufacture the three types of meteorite ore. He also sells silver ore you'll probably need to purchase whenever you want to make a new silver sword. Perhaps most important of all, Berthold sells the diagram for the jagged blade, which is the most powerful steel sword you can obtain in this chapter.

Whenever you approach Berthold's smithy, you may see a conversation play out between him and a human representative from the Blacksmiths' Guild. This looks an awful lot like it should trigger some sort of quest, but it doesn't. Geralt can interrupt the conversation by speaking with Berthold, but can't really interfere in the situation at all. It's mostly meant as flavor to help establish the lowly position nonhumans are forced into in Flotsam.

Einar Gausel

Barber

Item	Price	Item	Price
Three Years Among the Endregas	64	The Temerian Royal Dynasty	64
Nekkers in the Mist	32	Magic and Power	64
The Horrors of War: Rotfiends	64	The Feudal Society and Its Enemies	64
Wraiths: Fear and Trembling	95	The Viziman Uprising	64
Drowners: A Textbook for Initiates of the Order of the Flaming Rose	32	The Temerian Special Forces	64
The Kayran—A Monograph	251	Minor Books (Random Selection)	64

Einar Gausel is the other important merchant in the Nonhuman District. He sells only books, most of which have no effect on quests but let you learn more about the game's lore. Do note, though, that any book he sells that pertains to monsters can be read to give Geralt knowledge of that monster's strengths and weaknesses. A few quests require that you acquire this knowledge in-game, either by slaying tons of the appropriate monster or buying the right book from Einar. It's worth picking up his books about various monster types if you have cash to spare.

Einar is also a barber. That is, you can visit him and pay a few orens to change Geralt's hairstyle into something else. Looting Einar's shop lets you find a rare armor enhancement called the dwarven enhancement. It's one of the few +2 enhancements easily available in the game, so stockpile it for later use. As a final note, you can get services from Einar at all hours, even if you have to wake him up in bed.

When you initially speak to Einar Gausel, he mentions that Síle de Tansarville purchased a book from him called *De Vermis Mysteriis*. This is a reference to an nonexistent book whose title would translate roughly as *The Mysteries of the Worm*. Early horror author H.P. Lovecraft incorporated it into his Cthulhu mythos tales, which has led to it being widely referenced in other works of fiction. Einar Gausel himself is also an homage, named after the real-life Norwegian chess master Einar Johan Gausel.

Lobinden

Lobinden is the last safe area you can linger in before setting out into the forests and swamps around Flotsam. You primarily visit this area to interact with some important NPCs as part of quest lines. There are also three noteworthy merchants who do business primarily in the Lobinden area. Note that events that affect Flotsam don't necessarily affect Lobinden to the same degree.

Cedric

Craftsman

Item	Price	Item	Price
Formula: Dancing Star	84	Diagram: Biter	226
Formula: Dragon's Dream	111	Diagram: Kayran Trap	276
Formula: Devil's Puffball	77	Diagram: Well-Balanced Dagger	89
Formula: Flare	35	Diagram: Kayran Carapace Armor Reinforcements	376
Formula: Stenchbulb	63	Rotten Meat	7
Formula: Zerrikanian Sun	97	Bauble	14
Formula: Grapeshot	70	Endrega Gland Extract	14
Formula: Red Haze	84	Phosphorescent Crystal	20
Talgar Winter	76	Thumper	14
Clawer	51	Leather	20
Conflagration	76	Timber	7
Grapeshot	101	Endrega Hide	89
Rusty Well-Balanced Dagger	26	Twine	14
Robust Well-Balanced Dagger	51	Oil	14
Diagram: Conflagration	251	Essence of Death	189
Diagram: Clawer	189	Arachas Eyes	439
Diagram: Talgar Winter	276	Troll Tongue	439
Diagram: Rage	251		

Cedric can act both as a merchant and a craftsman after you have an initial conversation with him. He operates during daylight hours and sells some extremely useful stuff. Among his wares are diagrams for every type of trap that can be crafted in the game, as well as several useful bomb formulas and a diagram for the only type of throwing dagger that can be crafted. He also sells a few ingredient items that you otherwise have to obtain as monster drops, which can come in handy during certain side quests in this chapter.

Sendler

Craftsman

Item	Price	Item	Price
Hardened Leather Jacket	465	Hardened Leather	26
Light Leather Jacket	194	Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264
Quilted Jacket	282	Diagram: Diamond Dust	314
Fibre Enhancer	33	Diagram: Amethyst Armor Enhancement	201
Mail Enhancement	158	Diagram: Diamond Armor Reinforcements	276
Armor Enhancement	32	Diagram: Studded Leather Trousers	76

Leather Enhancement	33	Diagram: Leather Jacket	126
Reinforced Leather Enhancement	34	Diagram: Heavy Leather Jacket	276
Short Gauntlets	137	Diagram: Light Leather Armor	251
Robust Leather Trousers	137	Diagram: Hardened Leather Boots	101
Twine	14	Diagram: Long, Robust Gauntlets	151
Cloth	20	Diagram: Superb Leather Trousers	126
Robust Cloth	32	Robust Leather Reinforcement	33
Leather	20		

There's not a lot in Sendler's shop that's going to be worth buying at this point in the game, but he still serves a very useful function. He's the only craftsman in this part of the game that operates around the clock. As with Einar, just wake him up when he's asleep at night and he'll be quite willing to do business.

Rainy Season

Before setting off into the forest from Lobinden (or anywhere else in Flotsam), pay a little attention to the weather. It rains periodically during the game. This is a basically random occurrence and the duration is also random. During a rainy period, NPCs may change their locations as they move to shelter themselves from the weather. You can hear special lines of dialogue as the townsfolk complain about the weather as you move by. You may also find that one of your signs works a little differently.

During rainy weather, the Quen sign's effects are heightened. You can absorb more damage with it relative to its upgrade level. If you've purchased the Venting skill, then you should find that a single cast of Quen can dish out more punishment to enemies, too. If you happen to head out for a battle during the rain, then take advantage of it and use Quen even if it's not a sign you ordinarily use.

Also bear in mind that when it's raining, the incineration critical effect goes off less frequently. It's not impossible to incinerate enemies while it's raining, just a lot less likely. So if you've invested in the Enhanced Igni Sign skill or made a lot of dancing stars or conflagrations, well, don't bother using them against enemies while it's raining.

Anezka

Item	Price	Item	Price
Formula: Rook	173	Formula: Wolf	77
Formula: Golden Oriole	63	Balisse	11
Formula: Petri's Philtre	26	White Myrtle Petals	12
Formula: Falka's Blood	139	Celandine	10
Formula: Brown Oil	125	Wolfsbane	15
Formula: Cat	70	Scleroderm	14
Formula: Samum	104	Cortinarius	16
Formula: Swallow	70	Bryonia	24
Formula: Tawny Owl	207	Mandrake Root	20
Formula: Specter Oil	104	Verbena	24
Formula: Necrophage Oil	125	Wolf's Aloe Leaves	126
Formula: Blade Oil	70	Green Mold	126

Formula: Insectoid Oil	111	Endrega Teeth	64

Anezka sells a lot of extremely useful alchemy formulas, as well as a few very rare alchemy items. In particular, she sells the endrega teeth that you need to amass 15 of in order to craft the jagged blade. While it's possible to grind endregas until you get 15 teeth, this demands a lot of patience. If you get tired of grinding, you can just buy endrega teeth from Anezka every time she restocks.

There's an easter egg in Lobinden that only players of the original PC game *The Witcher* will get. Talk to the various NPCs and you should find one who asks you about "8,000 orens," a reward King Foltest promised Geralt at the end of the first game.

Side Quest: Poker Face: Flotsam

Once you've gotten a feel for Flotsam, looted to your heart's content, and maybe done some shopping, you can get back to questing. You can do many of the side quests for this chapter in any order, so if you want to skip around, feel free. The main thing is that you have to do these side quests while you're in Flotsam. At the end of the chapter, events cause you to leave the city, and you will never return. Likewise, certain story decisions in main quests may cause quest-necessary NPCs to become unavailable. The walkthrough will try to point this out whenever possible.

For our purposes, we'll begin the side quests by doing the mini-game related ones. This should let Geralt begin building up a store of cash he can spend on the diagram for the jagged blade and any other formulas and diagrams that seem useful to you. The easiest of the mini-game side quests is the one for dice poker, so we'll do this one first.

To initiate this quest, head to the bottom floor of the Flotsam inn. Look for a trio of men named Casimir, Bendeck, and Zindrab. You must first defeat Casimir and Bendeck, which gains you the right to play Zindrab. After you defeat Zindrab, head to Einar Gausel's shop in the Nonhuman District. Einar will agree to play you there only after you've defeated Zindrab. Once you've defeated Einar, go to Sendler's shop in Lobinden and challenge him.

Once you've defeated Sendler, you've cleared the quest (and probably earned a couple hundred orens). You automatically get the orens you won in your last bet. After that, a dialogue begins where you can take either an extra 150 orens from Sendler or ask him for a diagram for one of three types of traps. You can ask him for the diagram for making conflagration ("an explosive trap"), clawer ("steel jaws"), or Talgar winter ("freezing trap"). Take the Talgar winter.

Because you are fundamentally playing a dice game, there is a strong element of luck to how this quest resolves. You can play any dice poker opponent as many times as you like, but you have to wager orens each time. A losing streak in dice poker can end up costing you quite a bit of money. You may want to save before challenging each of the quest's opponents, so you can simply reload if you happen to lose.

How to Win in Dice Poker

The rules of dice poker in *The Witcher 2* are modeled off the real world game of dice poker, which is very similar to the poker card game. They will be very intuitive if you've ever played poker or real world dice poker before. If you haven't, here's a quick explanation of how the game works.

To defeat your opponent, you need to roll a better "hand" with the game's five dice. You roll the dice by flicking your right control stick. Be sure to do it gently. If you roll hard and knock a die out of the playing field, then you have to finish the round with the four dice you have left. You get to roll your dice twice. After the first roll, you tap the interaction button to highlight dice you'd like to roll again.

The first time you roll, you can choose to bet orens on the outcome of your roll. Your opponent does the same. Before you roll the second time, you can choose to raise or lower your bet, and so can your opponent. Use this list of dice poker hands to determine how strong your hand currently is, and which dice you'd like to reroll on your second roll. The hands are listed from the strongest to the weakest hands.

Dice Poker Hands	
Five of a Kind	Five of any number
Royal Straight Flush	1-2-3-4-5 or 2-3-4-5-6
Four of a Kind	Four of any number
Full House	Three of one number and two of another
Three of a Kind	Three of any number
Two Pair	Two matched sets of numbers (e.g., 2-2-3-3-6)
One Pair	One pair of any number

The values of the dice involved are used to break ties. For instance, if you have a 5-5-5-5-5 hand and your opponent has a 6-6-6-6-6 hand, you lose the round. When you lose, you lose any orens you bet on your performance. If you tie, then you replay the round from the beginning with no orens lost or gained. When you win, you get back the orens you wagered and take your opponent's orens, too. Dice poker combines both skill and luck, so sometimes you just won't be able to roll a better hand than the opponent. Just keep trying until the dice fall your way.

Think the "Poker Face" quest name is a reference to the idea of a poker player having an unreadable face? Well, you're wrong. It's a reference to the Lady Gaga pop song "Poker Face."

Side Quest: One on One: Flotsam

Head into the lower level of the Flotsam inn and speak with Sheridan, a man in red who's hanging around the perimeter of the fistfighting circle. He invites you to participate in a tournament. If you accept, you basically fight three opponents in sequence, wagering on the outcome. If you've made it to this point in the game, you've already played the fistfighting mini-game successfully. Just hit the quick time events (QTE) button prompts when they appear onscreen. Remember that each prompt appears roughly in the button's position on whatever you're using as your input device. If you're playing on a PC and using a keyboard, W prompts appear at the top center of the screen. If you're using an Xbox 360 controller, the 4 prompts would appear at the top center. You don't have to do the fights back-to-back and can opt to go save or pursue another quest between bouts.

Your opponents for One on One: Flotsam are a random opponent for the first round, Fliparse, and then Tidy Tib. Note that no matter who you actually fight for your first round, your journal says you fought someone named Stycho the Sot. After you defeat Fliparse you meet King Ziggy, who invites you to meet him outside the Flotsam inn after sundown. This unlocks the **Fight Club** quest, which lets you fistfight tougher opponents to earn even more money.

Side Quest: Fight Club

At midnight or later, head to the Flotsam inn's town square entrance. King Ziggy will be standing off to its left as you approach, where you usually pass three men chatting idly. Make sure you're carrying as little weight as possible, especially if you didn't get the Strong Back trait in the first chapter. If you haven't already done **Indecent Proposal**, you're about to stumble on a golden opportunity for looting a difficult-to-access area of the game.

King Ziggy takes you to Loredo's compound. To enter, you have to agree to surrender your weapons to the guard. They go into a chest where you can retrieve them later. Once inside, take your time and don't follow King Ziggy too closely. Scan the area repeatedly and take everything that isn't nailed down. You can't get the iron frame by looting Loredo's compound during this quest, but you can take basically everything else of interest you would otherwise have to obtain during **Indecent Proposal**.

King Ziggy waits patiently for you to finish your looting spree and only moves ahead once you approach him from behind. As he opens up new areas for you, keep scanning and looting. Eventually he leads you into an underground cavern area that you can enter only during this quest. Once you're there, the game auto-saves.

Now the quest proper begins. It's just like **One on One: Flotsam**, only the opponents you face are a bit tougher. After you agree to fight, you face Twigs, One-Punch Matho, Smugface, and Zdenek. You have to do these fights directly back-to-back with no chance to save your progress. If you ever give the "I've had enough of this malarkey" response, you simply fail the quest and won't get any winnings or experience. You get to keep whatever you looted from Loredo's compound, though.

Before you fight Zdenek, you have a conversation with Loredo where he orders you to throw the fight. If you agree and make sure not to defeat Zdenek, Loredo throws you out of the compound. You get 60 XP and 250 orens. The quest will be marked failed and you find out you caused Dandelion to lose all of his money (again).

If you say "And I'm not a conman," then the quest proceeds normally. After you beat Zdenek, you get 200 orens and 100 XP. Loredo threatens you on the way out and you should take this threat seriously. After you get the quest XP, immediately go to the gate guard and get your swords back. Make a point of re-equipping all of your armor.

A couple of thugs working for Loredo are going to hang around the door that connects the Craftsman's District to the town square. They attack you as soon as you draw near to them. They're unarmored, so they won't be any threat if you've re-equipped all of your gear. It is possible to avoid the thugs by simply going around them, since there are other ways to move from the Craftsman's District to the town square. They remain inconveniently in that location until you kill them, though. You might as well take care of it now.

The most obvious reference here is the name of the quest, which is an homage to the film *Fight Club*. A more subtle one is the final opponent you fight, Zdenek. In the original PC game *The Witcher*, Zdenek was an "ultimate fistfighter" who lived in the swamps near Vizima.

Another easter egg is the NPC, King Ziggy. He's named in homage to two different real people, the boxing promoters Don King and Ziggy Rosalski. Also, if you throw the fight as Loredo asks, Dandelion makes reference to a "little kayran" in the subsequent cutscenes. This is a reference to Paul the Octopus, the mascot of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Side Quest: Bring It On: Flotsam

This is the arm-wrestling quest for Flotsam, and probably the most lucrative of the mini-game side quests for this chapter. To initiate it, go talk to Zoltan at the inn and pick the dialogue option that has the arm-wrestling icon next to it ("Managed to stay in shape, Zoltan?"). The match with Zoltan is something of a tutorial that you can't wager on, so you can just repeat it until you get the hang of arm-wrestling well enough to beat him.

After you beat Zoltan, go talk to a fellow named Skinny Sten who sits at the wooden table to the right of the inn's harbor entrance. You may want to save your game before you face him, since you have to wager orens in this bout. Once you beat Skinny Sten, you get 10 XP and double whatever amount of orens you bet on that round. Skinny Sten's maximum wager is 15, so you can earn up to 30 orens by beating him. The penalty for losing an arm-wrestling bout is losing twice your bet, which is why it's a good idea to save before a match. You can hold onto your money by reloading your game after a loss.

Skinny Sten suggests you challenge Wiry Wilks, who is conveniently sitting at the same table. He's also worth 10 XP to beat and double your bet, up to a max of 50 orens. After you beat Wiry Wilks, you're urged to take on Big Max. Beating Big Max is worth another 10 XP and up to 60 orens, depending on your bet. Big Max tells you to go look for Bartholomew Bargee in Lobinden, who has never been beaten. He's your final opponent for this side quest.

You should set out to find Bargee during the day. He's at the far northeast end of Lobinden, building boats. If you head out at night, Bargee is in his home and will not wrestle you. His minimum bet is 50 orens and his maximum is 100, so you can earn up to 200 orens for beating him. You definitely want to save before facing him, because he's a far more challenging opponent than anyone you've faced before. Once he's defeated, you get 20 XP and clear the quest. If you beat every prior opponent after making a maximum bet, you're also 340 orens richer.

All of the other arm-wrestling opponents let you challenge them again freely after you've beaten them once, but you can only challenge Bargee once. If you've completed this quest, the dice poker quest, and a fistfighting quest, you should unlock the Gambler achievement. By the way, the characters that Zoltan and Bargee mention after you defeat them can be encountered in Chapter 2.

How to Win at Arm-Wrestling

Wrestling is not an especially difficult mini-game, but it can be very counterintuitive and difficult to learn. The goal of an arm-wrestling match is to keep the reticle with the arm-wrestling icon in the center of the brown bar. If Geralt has momentum, the bar moves toward the right-hand side of the screen. If he's losing momentum, it moves toward the left.

The trick to arm-wrestling is that the pressure you must apply to the control stick is usually very gentle, similar to the very light taps you use for rolling dice. Only occasionally, when fighting more difficult opponents like Bargee, will you want to apply any sort of significant pressure. Most of the time, moving the control stick the way you would to make Geralt walk around is almost guaranteed to make the reticle fly out of the bar and make you lose momentum. Instead use very light taps and constantly judge the jitter that's affecting the reticle. Sometimes the reticle is inclined to stay in the center of the bar once you have momentum, and applying any pressure would be to your detriment.

The bar gets narrower as it approaches either end of the screen, which makes screwing up your own momentum easier and trying to gain momentum from an opponent more difficult. Once you've done a lot of arm-wrestling, you'll develop an intuitive sense for the bar's size, the reticle's momentum, and how much pressure to apply to the control stick to get desired results. In the meantime, just make sure you save before facing challenging opponents that require high bets, like Bartholomew Bargee. One thing to remember is that the longer a bout lasts, the harder it becomes for either side to reverse momentum.

Now that the mini-game quests are done, it's time to attempt more dangerous quests like monster hunts. To get Geralt ready for that, we're going to focus on the main plot for just a little while.

Indecent Proposal

Time to pay Loredo a visit. Meditate until midnight, then go to the entrance into his compound. Roche appears to enter the area with you. You can follow Roche or scan the area and look for opportunities to find loot (if you didn't come here earlier as part of **Fight Club**). Roche immediately notices that Loredo has a ballista in his compound, which triggers a sub-quest you need to resolve before you can proceed any further.

The Ballista

Roche wants Geralt to find a way to disable Loredo's ballista. It's being guarded, so you can't just walk up to it. Instead, look around the courtyard for a potential distraction, like perhaps Margarita the prostitute. Once you spot her, go have a chat. She's willing to go distract the guard, but only for the right price. The amount she charges is random, but should be trifling (less than 100 orens). You can always just buy her off by offering her maximum bid.

Of course, there's also a cheapskate way to get Margarita's services. Ask her if there's any other way you can convince her and she says that she'll distract the guard if you sufficiently humiliate a couple of big lugs named Myron and Alphonse she doesn't especially like. Humiliating them means beating them in arm-wrestling, which should be a snap if you've already beaten Bartholomew Bargee. You don't have to wager anything in these bouts and you get 50 additional XP for beating them both.

Go talk to Margarita once you've won. Follow her and wait until she's led the guard all the way off of the ballista's platform, then head up and sabotage it by pressing the interaction button. This finishes off the quest and gives you 100 XP.

Indecent Proposal

Now go talk to Roche, who is at the top of the stairway that leads into Loredo's headquarters. You're told that Loredo is meeting with Síle, so he won't see you right now. Follow Roche down the stairway and speak to him at the bottom. Ask him "What now?" and Roche says that all the guards around make him suspicious, so he wants Geralt to sneak around a bit after he's distracted them.

A merchant then heads over and says that he has an offer for Geralt. Hear him out. The merchant confirms that the guards are watching something that would be very useful to Geralt, a part that's necessary for making the kayran trap. This is the only way to obtain the part, so you might as well do it. Get ready for a stealth mission. Drinking a Cat potion right now can be very useful, as it lets you effectively see through walls to track the guards' movements. The only downside to using Cat here is that it's going to make a couple of cutscenes you trigger look rather disturbing.

Roche gives you an opening by ordering the arbalist guarding the path that leads behind Loredo's headquarters away. At the big rock just beyond that, take the right fork. A guard patrols the left fork. Make sure you aren't seen and you can simply slip around him. Round the corner, being careful not to make noise by bumping into any of the buckets lying on the ground. There should be a guard taking a quick piss just beyond the corner, with his back to you. Move up to him quickly and stun him. If you try to just climb the rock while his back is turned, you're going to get caught.

You can't get through the locked door, but there's a series of walls you can climb over just a few paces away. Use that to cross into the inner courtyard of Loredo's compound. The game auto-saves once you've dropped into the inner courtyard and moved against the wall on the opposite side. A cutscene shows you a glimpse of Síle in a window. It's time to drop some eaves.

Wait for the guard on the other side of the wall you're hugging to walk forward from it. Move up behind him and stun him, then head back to the other side of the wall and climb up the platforms beneath the window where you saw Síle earlier. Press yourself against the wall and press the interaction button to listen in on Loredo and Síle's conversation. Doing this awards you 150 XP.

At this point you can backtrack and go talk to Roche, but that means you don't get the part for the kayran trap. Instead, snoop around the courtyard a bit more. From the platforms you're standing on, you should be able to see the walking patterns of the remaining guards. One is over by the entrance to the underground arena used in **Fight Club**, patrolling a series of low walls behind some piles of lumber. If you've done **Fight Club** already, you've already looted everything of interest in that area and can safely ignore it.

The other guard is patrolling an area near the compound's far wall. This is the guy you need to take out to get the part for the kayran trap. Head over the wall near the guard's path and wait for him to begin moving to the right. Quickly get behind him and stun him when he stops. The timing for this can be tricky, since this guard tends to turn his side to you. It's easy for Geralt to accidentally end up in his field of vision. Just keep trying until you manage to get behind him and knock him over.

Leap over the low wall near the door this guard was watching. Inside is an area where a trunk shimmers orange. Loot that trunk to obtain the iron frame, the diagram for the robust witcher's silver sword, Astrogarus's armor, and a fibre enhancer. You should also unlock the Man of the Shadows achievement. Once you've got these treasures, climb up one of the ladders and to the end of one of the wooden planks. Interact to drop down into the courtyard where you left Roche waiting for you. Now you can casually walk up to him and tell him about what you saw through Loredo's window. At this point in the quest you get another 150 XP.

Follow Roche up the stairs. When you ask to see Loredo this time, you're allowed to go in (but Roche is forced to wait outside). Regardless of how you make choices in this conversation, eventually it becomes clear that in addition to wanting you to kill the kayran, Loredo would also like you to work with him to capture or kill Iorveth. Whether you agree to take Loredo's deal or refuse has no effect on your game, but it does affect your journal text. After the conversation ends, loot Loredo's room and then exit the compound. This completes the quest and gives you a 300 XP reward.

Like many quests in this game, **Indecent Proposal** is named in homage to a film that goes by the same name.

Side Quest: Hung Over

Wondering where Roche went? Head over to the Blue Stripes headquarters in the town square. You can talk to him there and also find his assistant, Ves, hanging out with a few of her Blue Stripes drinking buddies. Talk to her to initiate this quest. When she asks you if you care to try her in knife-throwing, say yes.

You enter a mini-game where you need to hit targets in the room as the soldiers call them out. Typically, Geralt is asked to hit first the map on the wall, then the cured ham dangling from the ceiling, and then the oar hanging in the corner. If you hit all three targets without missing or spending too long aiming, Geralt wins. Beating Ves lets you gain the Thrower attribute and win the diagram of the well-balanced dagger. Both are very worthwhile to have.

After the incident with Roche and the peasant, agree to have a drink to keep the quest going. A few beers later, Geralt gets a chance to arm-wrestle Fenn and Thirteen. If you beat them both, you get the sword of Creyden. This isn't an especially good steel sword, but it's the only chance you have to obtain it.

The next day, after copious amounts of alcohol, Geralt wakes up mostly naked on the beach with all his stuff gone and a crazy tattoo on his neck. A local offers to tell Geralt what happened in return for a bribe. You can either bribe the fisherman or attempt to get him to tell you what happened for free with a special intimidation decision. The fisherman's maximum bribe is only a pittance, 33 orens, so pay up.

The fisherman tells you to go talk to Madame Margot at the brothel, so head for the Flotsam inn. She won't tell you what happened to you last night unless you bribe her, and this time, there's no alternative option. Her max is fortunately also a pittance, a mere 31 orens, so pay up again. After you hear Margot's story about your ill-advised whore-based watercraft adventure, go talk to Ves at the Blue Stripes headquarters. She gives you a key, which lets you open the locked box by the window. It contains your gear and a deep sense of shame. You gain 50 XP.

Go talk to Triss at the Flotsam inn now. Ask her if she knows how to remove a tattoo. When she gets done laughing at you, she says she can remove the tattoo with green mold, white myrtle petals, and wolf's aloe leaves. You're probably swimming in white myrtle petals if you've been picking herbs diligently, but you'll have to buy the wolf's aloe leaves and green mold from Anezka. Of course, you can also opt to keep the tattoo if you like the way it looks.

Geralt's drunk adventure and the ensuing tattoo, just like the title of this quest, are a reference to the film *The Hangover*. As an extra easter egg, the soldier Thirteen is named in homage to a character from the television show *House, M.D.* (Yeah, we know the Thirteen in the TV show is a woman. That's still who he's named after.)

A Sword for Monsters

Now sober and (hopefully) awash in orens from loot and winnings, it should be trivial to get Geralt a new silver sword so he can go kill some monsters. You can buy one or forge one, but as soon as some sort of silver sword is in Geralt's inventory this quest is over. You've got four basic options that don't involve setting foot in the forest or other monster-infested areas.

If you picked up the diagram of the witcher's silver sword earlier, you can take it to Berthold or one of the other craftsmen to be forged. You'll have to buy two silver ore and expend one diamond dust, one iron ore, one timber, and 35 orens on this task. That said, the silver sword this diagram produces is the second-weakest in the game.

You can just buy the silver-plated sword from Berthold for 304 orens. Of course, this is more expensive than forging the witcher's silver sword and results in Geralt having to carry around the worst silver sword in the game.

To buy a better sword, you can go to the Mysterious Merchant and buy the robust witcher's silver sword for 267 orens. This really isn't a bad deal, but if you've done the guide's quests in order, you already have the diagram for the witcher's robust silver sword. That means you can just make one.

For PC Players

If you're playing on the PC and imported save data from the original *Witcher* game, then you have another option for completing the quest. Importing save data from the original *Witcher* also imports toned-down versions of whatever end-game weapons Geralt had in the previous game. So if you have one of the original *Witcher* silver swords still in your inventory when Chapter 1 begins, this quest is effectively resolved the moment it spawns.

What's amazing about doing things this way is how similar making the robust witcher's silver sword is to making the much weaker witcher's silver sword. The robust version only requires one extra iron ore and the slightly higher crafting fee of 45 orens. Equip it immediately once you've made it and the quest is complete. You can keep using this sword comfortably until you've got a chance to get the diagram for the chapter's best silver sword.

Side Quest: The Scent of Incense

Now that we've got a silver monster-killing sword, it's time to get into some mischief. Head for Flotsam's harbor area. On the lower pier, you should find an NPC named Vencel Pugg. He wants the formula to a special incense being sold at Vilmos Bartok's shop. Agree to his request (otherwise the quest simply doesn't start), then head to Vilmos Bartok's shop in the town square. Only now there's an angry mob gathered in front of it…

Side Quest: Little Shop of Dreams

This is a sub-quest. Basically, a bunch of peasants think Vilmos Bartok's incense shop is actually selling some sort of addictive drug. They offer to reward Geralt if he can confirm this and help them get the shop closed down. It is entirely possible for Geralt to do this, but be advised that the "handsome reward" the peasant woman mentions is only 20 orens.

Anyway, when you're ready, go talk to Vilmos Bartok. If you plan to try to shut his shop down, first select his trading dialogue option and buy any formulas you want from him. Next, ask Bartok if he's selling drugs. After he replies, you have four potential responses. If you say "I see," the quest basically hangs and you can leave to do something else, then come back later. The other three options let you try to gather more information about the incense before deciding either way. It is highly recommended that you try using the Axii special decision (third on the list of four), as it reveals something about how Bartok got the formula that the other two options won't.

After you try one of the three information options, then you get to make the decision that either leaves the shop open (the top option) or closes it down. The second option lets you persuade Bartok into closing his shop, while the third lets you intimidate him into doing it. Sometimes you get an "I'll decide later" option, which means you can try one of the other information options on Bartok or go do something else for a while before making a final decision. If you close down Bartok's shop while he still has the special incense formula, he automatically gives the real formula to Geralt before he disappears.

You can also get the real formula from Bartok by initiating the dialogue tree that begins with, "I need a certain formula." Bartok balks at giving you his actual secret formula and instead offers to give you a similar one. You can accept the fake by saying "I agree," or use a special intimidation decision to try to force Bartok to give you the genuine article. You can complete **The Scent of Incense** by taking either the fake or the real formula, but note that Pugg won't give you a reward for the fake. If your intimidation attempt fails, you have no choice but to complete the quest using the fake formula or reload your last save. Overall, it's more lucrative to immediately close Bartok's shop so he gives you the real formula automatically.

If you use any method to close him down, you get the 20 orens from the peasants and you can no longer buy from Bartok. If you leave the shop open, you get no orens but you can keep buying things from Bartok. If you've already bought everything from Bartok you might want, you might as well close his shop down and get the extra orens.

Side Quest: The Scent of Incense

Return to the harbor. When you talk to Vencel Pugg, you can take the "Not yet" option if you want to go do something else instead. If you say "I'm not about to give it to you," Pugg threatens you and then leaves. If you head toward point 51 on the Flotsam map, Pugg's Ambush, Pugg appears there with four bandits who attack you all at once. While the bandits are lightly armored, they have a lot of vitality and soak a fair bit of damage before they go down. You can make this battle go a lot quicker if you've made some bombs or drunk some potions beforehand. After you defeat the bandits, you finish the quest and gain 85 XP.

If you hand Pugg the formula, he says he wants to check its authenticity in a lab before he pays you. Go to point 52 on the Flotsam map, Pugg's Meeting. Talk to him and Pugg says that before taking you to his secret lab, he has to blindfold you. If you refuse to be blindfolded, Pugg insists on it and you get another option to accept or refuse. If you refuse a second time, Pugg relents and marks his secret lab on your map so you can meet up with him there. Refusing to be blindfolded is worth 20 XP.

Walk to the secret lab and speak with Vencel Pugg there. If you gave him the real formula, he proclaims it an authentic, legal form of fisstech. You gain 85 XP, 200 orens, and the formula for the Tawny Owl potion for resolving the quest this way. After you've spoken with Pugg, loot his lab to make yourself feel better. You should be able to find the otherwise unobtainable superb short sword and a moon rune. You can then walk back to Flotsam.

If you walked to the secret lab but gave Pugg the false formula, he grows angry and orders his men to attack you. Defeating them all should be fairly easy. You receive 85 XP after you've defeated them, but you won't receive any orens. You get to loot the secret lab after the battle, though. You can return to Flotsam by simply walking or by using the boat moored on the right side of the cave. Using the boat is best if looting the lab has taken you over your encumbrance limit.

Now let's say you allowed Pugg to blindfold you. Pugg's men jump you on the way to the lab and take your weapons. You're held prisoner while Pugg does the tests to determine if the formula is real or a fake. If the formula is real, then after the tests Pugg says he will blindfold you again while his men escort you out. If you agree to be blindfolded on the way out, then you obtain 200 orens, your weapons are returned to you, and you get the formula for the Tawny Owl potion for your troubles. You do not receive any XP for resolving the quest and you won't be able to return to the secret lab to loot it.

If you refuse to be blindfolded again, Pugg makes it clear that he intends to keep holding you hostage. This is also his reaction if you allowed yourself to be blindfolded on the way to the lab but gave him a fake formula. Now you're going to have to fight your way out of the secret lab. The easiest way to do this is to blow the door open with Aard, roll rapidly across the cave, grab the superb short sword off the weapons stand, and then hack up the four bandits guarding you with it. Switch from Aard to Quen and you should have no problems. You can make the battle even easier by drinking some potions and preparing bombs before you bust your way out of the cell. After you've beaten the four bandits and Pugg, you get 85 XP. You don't get the 200 orens, but you do get to loot the secret lab and recover your weapons. From here you can simply walk out of the cave or use the boat to sail back to Flotsam.

The overall most lucrative way to resolve this quest is to refuse to be blindfolded, then give Pugg the real formula. Of course, this makes Geralt part of a drug-trafficking scheme and that may not sit well with you. If you want to keep a clean conscience, then any outcome where you get access to the secret lab and then kill Pugg and his men there lets you get all of the unique loot associated with this quest without having to accept dirty orens.

Side Quest: The Nekker Contract

Enough of these morally ambiguous shenanigans—let's go kill some monsters. To initiate this quest, go to the notice board outside the Flotsam inn and take the notice marked "Nekker Contract." Your next quest goal is to learn more about nekkers. You can just wander out into the woods and kill nekkers awhile to fulfill this requirement, but it's much easier to just go buy a book on the subject. If you got lucky, you may have found a copy of the right book during the Prologue while looting. If not, then go pay Einar Gausel a visit and purchase the book *Nekkers in the Mist*. Read this book to gain knowledge of nekkers. You can look at Geralt's knowledge on the second tab of his character screen.

The book mentions that nekkers are best destroyed by grapeshot bombs. This is a hint that you need grapeshot to complete this particular quest. Go visit Cedric and purchase the formula for grapeshot. You want to manufacture at least four before setting out on this quest. You're going to use the grapeshot when prompted to destroy the tunnels leading into nekker nests. To do this, just stand by a nest out in the forest and you should get an interaction prompt to place a bomb.

If you read the journal's description of grapeshot, you can uncover an easter egg. It makes reference to a gnome named Alfred Nabel, also mentioned in flavor text that appeared in the original PC game *The Witcher*. In the world of *The Witcher*, Nabel is a gnome who invented explosives. His name is a play on the name of the real-life inventor of dynamite, Alfred Nobel.

Be careful when you first venture out into the forests. The area around Flotsam is loaded with snares (traps) placed by Cedric. They're intended to damage monsters, so you can lure enemies over them to damage them a bit. If you step onto one while running through the area, however, it's going to damage you. You can detect snares in an area by scanning with your medallion. Once you've found a trap, you can disarm it and (if you like) pick it up to take with you. Take things slow while you're getting used to the forest and scan frequently.

During this quest is an excellent time to try to earn the Sapper attribute. If you interrupt Geralt's actions five times while he's in the animation for disarming a trap or snare, he gains the Sapper character attribute. A good way to interrupt the animation is by scanning with your medallion. Sapper gives Geralt a 50 percent chance of avoiding all damage dealt by traps and bombs, which makes it particularly useful for alchemist builds.

You can find the nekker nests by looking at the map or tracking the quest in-game. Nekkers aren't too strong and you can probably just hack and slash your way through them as you plant the bombs. If you want some extra insurance, drink Brock, Golden Oriole, and Rook or Swallow. Coat your silver blade in brown oil before you set out. You can also prepare some Zerrikanian sun or samum bombs to help slow down any big packs you run into while you're trying to plant the bombs. Prioritize planting the bombs as soon as possible, since the nekkers respawn at a fairly high rate until you do. Keep Quen up when monsters are around, or if you hear a monster's snarl but can't see it.

Tip

When fighting the nekkers, you encounter elite warrior nekkers. One of the items they can drop upon defeat is warrior nekker blood. You need this to complete a quest much later in the game, so be sure to hold on to at least one.

Note that endregas can spawn around some of the nekker nests and are much tougher opponents at this point in the game. On the other hand, endregas and nekkers don't care for each other and, provided you leave them alone, will actually fight each other. You may need to be ready to battle drowners when you go after the nest that's farthest to the southeast, since they can occur around the edges of the pond at night. While the drowners aren't too dangerous, they tend to spawn in packs of around five. This is another good time to use bombs for crowd control.

After you finish this quest, you can opt to go see Louis Merse in Flotsam to receive your reward. You should get 75 XP and 150 orens if you do. You can also wait until later in the game to turn this quest in if you like. Note that completing this quest counts toward unlocking the Pest Control achievement.

If you complete both **The Nekker Contract** and the **The Endrega Contract**, you get an additional reward. If you wish, you can simply start **The Endrega Contract** now instead of turning the quest in to Louis Merse. This walkthrough does not recommend this, as **The Endrega Contract** can be fairly challenging. This walkthrough recommends doing some other quests and toughening up a bit before you attempt it.

Side Quest: In the Claws of Madness

You can beat nekkers, so now it's time to try your skills at handling wraiths. Head to the burned mansion in the southwest corner of the map after you've spoken to Cedric to initiate the quest. You meet Rupert standing on the winding path that leads up to the mansion area. After you speak with him, crazed nekkers swarm into the area. They won't come down the path at you very quickly, so stand just below them and take them all out with a grapeshot or similarly damaging bomb. Once you move into the area of the burned mansion looking for Gridley's dog, some more nekker stragglers attack. The entrance that leads into the burned mansion's underground levels should be nearby. Head in. Note that there are some circles in this area that can be useful to trigger beforehand, though.

Head to the quest marker to trigger a cutscene. Once the cells are aflame, you can only head to the end of the hallway and then jump into what appears to be an empty room. If you walk to the quest marker, wraiths appear and jump you. Depending on your level and equipment, this could be a fairly lethal encounter. A savvier way to do the battle is to avoid the center of the room and go directly to the chest, which contains hospital files (III) and hospital records. Prepare some basic potions if you like; Petri's Philtre can be quite useful here, if you use it to buff up Quen's strength. Oil your silver sword with specter oil. When you're prepared for a fight, take the chest's contents. That auto-spawns the wraiths.

Wraiths attack with a combination of weak sword strikes and a one-two combo where the second blow is very strong. You can think you're doing all right fighting wraiths, then get hit in the back a couple of times and be dead before you know it. Focus on keeping Quen up, and use bombs whenever the wraiths cluster together. When you can lead one away from the pack, then use a combination of light and strong attacks while you've got an opening. Strong attacks enhanced by specter oil can really chew through a wraith's vitality and drop it quickly. If you keep Quen up, the wraith's one-two combination is much less damaging. Be sure to loot the wraiths' bodies, as they drop rare essence of death. Make sure you obtain and hold onto at least one essence of death for use in a quest later in the chapter.

Once the wraiths are gone, the flames blocking the only way out die down. Continue to follow the Nilfgaardian ghost. This involves going through an area where fire hems you in from both sides. Use Quen to protect yourself from the flames. You eventually come to another large, empty room that's about to be inhabited by a pair of wraiths. Make any preparations for battle you deem necessary before hopping in. These wraiths spawn in random locations in the room, so be prepared to dodge-roll once you enter the area. Once you've got the wraiths clustered together, put up Quen and start bombing them or using hit-and-run tactics.

Once the wraiths are defeated, loot the chest to get hospital files (I), some random loot and orens, and the excellent robust cutlass. In the next hallway, use Aard on the false wall to your left to reveal the hiding place of a random armor enhancement. Continue exploring until you find Gridley. If you duck down the hallway just before you reach him, you can trigger a circle of endurance hidden in one of the cells.

Note

You begin seeing strange glyphs on the walls around this part of the quest. You can examine them more closely by walking toward them and pressing your interaction button. Later in the quest, you can trigger dialogue sequences that explain what the glyphs mean. There's nothing you can do with the glyphs that affects gameplay, so don't worry about that. If you side with Roche, you can meet the artist who drew the disturbing blood glyphs during the quest Death to the Traitor.

Take a right just before the wall of fire at the end of the hall to reach the room where the tranquilizers you need to calm down Gridley are located. Note that when you draw near to the tranquilizers, a wraith spawns. As soon as you defeat it, a second wraith spawns. This is a very cramped area and it's easy for you to end up pinned against a wall by the second wraith. Before you enter this room, make any necessary combat preparations. In particular, make sure your sword's specter oil is still in effect.

Loot the room for the medicine and for some interesting papers, including hospital files (II), in a nearby chest. Among the documents is a paper pertaining to the Wild Hunt that can be brought up later if you've obtained it. Once you give the medicine to Gridley, he calms down and tells you the real reason why he and Rupert returned to the madhouse. Let Gridley flee while you go speak to the Nilfgaardian ghost to find out how to break the curse that lies heavily on the ruined mansion as well as Rupert and Gridley. After you speak to the ghost, you can decide to resolve the quest in one of several ways. First, find Gridley in a nearby hallway and speak with him to be taken instantly back outside.

If you think the Nilfgaardian ghost's thirst for vengeance is justified, you can easily trick Gridley and Rupert into following you back into the mansion. Say "You need to see something. Come with me." Simply leave them in the Nilfgaardian ghost's clutches and their fate is sealed. They'll burst into flames, satisfying the ghost and lifting the curse. If you do things this way, you can loot Gridley and Rupert's bodies for 60 orens each and a diagram for the robust witcher's silver sword (but honestly, you should already have one of these if you're trying to do this quest). You get 100 XP for resolving the quest this way.

If you don't think Rupert and Gridley deserve that, tell them "The ghost wants you dead." You automatically get two nekker eyes and two nekker hearts that you could use to try to trick the Nilfgaardian ghost. At this point, you can also go back to Flotsam and purchase two pigs' hearts and two sets of pigs' eyes from the butcher in the Craftsman's District. Mechanically, whether you use the pig body parts or the nekker body parts is immaterial, but you do get slightly different journal text depending on what you use to deceive the Nilfgaardian ghost.

The ghost knows you've tricked it as soon as it sees the hearts and eyes. It immediately attacks you. Fortunately, it's not even half so dangerous as the wraiths you've fought already. If you oil your silver sword with specter oil before you speak to the ghost, then your blows do very heavy damage to it. Just block the ghost's sword attacks, then counter with strong blows when it's staggered. The ghost is slow and you can hit it up to three times before it blocks. Keep Quen up, more to keep from setting yourself on fire at the edges of the room than for defense. After you defeat the ghost, you can get a little random loot and more hospital files (IV) from its body.

After you've defeated the ghost, go speak to Rupert and Gridley again. Now you get to decide what to do with them. If you say "You have to be punished," then Geralt takes them to Loredo. This reveals something rather interesting about Loredo's mother that you otherwise can't find out. Resolving the quest this way is worth 100 XP.

You can also opt to set Rupert and Gridley free after you've defeated the ghost, but this isn't recommended. The game considers this a poor decision and resolving the quest this way isn't worth any XP at all. Overall, the most lucrative way to resolve this quest is to let the ghost kill Gridley and Rupert, since that gives you the full 100 XP and lets you loot 120 orens off of their bodies. Also note that if you find all of the quest documents stashed away in the burned mansion during **In the Claws of Madness**, you unlock the Librarian achievement.

Side Quest: Malena

To begin this quest, just walk toward the group of guards standing near the entrance to Anezka's house in Lobinden. (In fact, it's possible that you've already triggered it while exploring the town.) Talk to Malena after you hear the guards begin accusing her. This initiates a cutscene. You can turn the quest down by saying "Sounds like a local squabble to me," but note that the game considers this a failure.

To accept the quest, say "Leave it to me," then head to the far east side of the Flotsam harbor. Take advantage of the circle of strength outside and apply the same potions you used when you cleared **The Nekker Contract**. Immediately upon entering the cave you should spot bloodstains on the ground. As you proceed a bit farther in, you encounter an enormous group of nekkers that can kill you quickly if you're ill-prepared or let yourself be surrounded. Keep Quen up and use bombs to help with crowd control. You can also make very efficient use of Axii here, since what tends to kill you is getting surrounded and backstabbed by warrior nekkers. If you mind-control one of them, the nekkers tend to surround your thrall instead, which leaves you free to pick off attackers at the edge of the group.

Once the initial pack of nekkers is taken care of, loot the bodies and the chest that's just past the entrance. Loot it and the corpse nearby. From here, keep exploring the cave. Be ready for more nekker attacks, but after you've taken out the first group the nekkers should be much easier to manage.

Continue to follow the bloodstains. Loot the bags you find up against the walls of the cave, as they contain silver ore. On the upper level of the cave, you should discover two guards whose bodies are peppered with Scoia'tael arrows. Be sure to examine one. From here, go all the way to the rear of the cave to find a ladder that leads up to a trap door. You can't use this trap door right now, but keep it in mind for later in the game. Now you can head back toward the cave's entrance. You may want to save before you exit.

Now that you know Malena is some sort of Scoia'tael agent, there are a few different ways you can opt to influence her situation. If you want, you can lie to the guards when they ask you what you found in the cave and say that monsters killed the two missing men. Although the guard is shown giving Geralt a pouch in the cutscene, you don't actually get any orens this way. Malena expresses her gratitude after Geralt sticks up for her and makes a tantalizing offer to meet him at the waterfall in the forest.

Of course, Malena really did lure those two guards into a Scoia'tael trap. You know it and she knows it. When you meet her at the waterfall, she says that you know too much to live. Roughly six Scoia'tael immediately attack Geralt. This fight can be extremely difficult if you get caught flat-footed, but there are a few ways to prepare for it. Make sure you make these preparations before you speak to Malena, as the game auto-saves at the end of the conversation.

Bombs are useful for crowd control, particularly dancing star bombs, but only try to use them from a safe distance. The Scoia'tael soldiers are quick enough to interrupt your throwing animations. It can be very wise to run far away from the waterfall in the course of this fight, with two or three Scoia'tael pursuing. This makes their numbers easier to manage.

If you prepare potions, anything that enhances Geralt's defensive abilities can give you an edge. If you're using more of a mage build for Geralt, Axii can be very useful here, especially if you can get two or three of the Scoia'tael to split away from the main group and follow you. If you like to play with traps, try peppering the waterfall pool with snares or furies before you speak with Malena, or create a big mess of traps in the forest and lead some Scoia'tael into it. Use Quen to help mitigate damage once the Scoia'tael numbers are manageable.

Whatever you do, don't try to fight these Scoia'tael the way you would nekkers or groups of dopey humans. The Scoia'tael are extremely fast and their group mixes archers and sword fighters. Sword-using Scoia'tael tend to parry your moves if you don't catch them in an attack animation, letting the archers shoot you in the back while you're occupied. Try to use bombs or signs to thin the Scoia'tael's numbers before you start closing to melee. Be sure to loot the Scoia'tael bodies if you do this battle, since one of them may carry the rare and very potent Dhu Bleidd armor enhancement.

After you defeat the Scoia'tael, you need to find Malena, who has disappeared. She's gone into the burned mansion from the **In the Claws of Madness** quest. If you've already finished the quest, she's very easy to find and waits in a pile of rubble that appears just to the north of the main house on your in-game map. You don't actually have to go inside the burned mansion. If you haven't done **In the Claws of Madness** yet, then going near the burned mansion triggers it. Malena may appear there or she might not. Overall, it's best simply to make sure you clear **In the Claws of Madness** before attempting this quest.

When you speak to Malena, you have a few dialogue options. If you say "You don't deserve any," then you can't speak to her anymore. To conclude the quest, Geralt must cut her down himself. You receive 125 XP for resolving the quest this way.

If you say "Loredo will judge you," you take her automatically back to Flotsam and hand her over to Loredo's men. You don't get any bonus XP for resolving the quest this way, so it's not recommended. After all, taking her back means admitting to Loredo's men that you fed them a line of bullshit earlier.

If you say "Away with you," Malena swears never to be seen again in Flotsam. You get 125 bonus XP for resolving the quest this way. So really, if you've taken the route that gets you into a fight with the Scoia'tael, either killing or exiling Malena is equally good. Just don't give her to Loredo.

Another option for Geralt is to tell the guards the truth about what he found in the cave but give Malena a chance to defend her actions. Say "They were shot," when the guard asks Geralt what happened to their missing men. Next, say "Let's hear it" when Malena swears that she'll tell them everything. Finally, say "Lead on" when she swears that there's something you need to see. If you've read the description of what happens if you meet Malena in the woods, you probably know where this is going. Malena leads Geralt and the guards back to the tree branch where Iorveth ambushed you earlier in the game.

Naturally, it's a Scoia'tael ambush! This battle is much easier than the one in the woods, since you have a bunch of guards to help keep the Scoia'tael from clustering around you. You don't need to prepare potions for this battle, just use Axii to turn the Scoia'tael into walking targets for the Flotsam town guard. As in the forest ambush, one of the Scoia'tael may be carrying a Dhu Bleidd you can pick up as loot.

If you choose to say "I don't believe you" after Malena tells her story, or simply say "Enough of your lies" earlier in the conversation, then the guards decide to take Malena to Loredo. Malena leaves cursing you, but you get 125 XP for being canny enough not to fall for her tricks.

So what's the best way to resolve this quest? Overall, it's probably to let Malena lead you and the town guards into an ambush. You get the 125 XP for any outcome where Malena pays for her crimes in some way. If you fight Scoia'tael during this quest, you always have a chance to pick up Dhu Bleidd as loot, but fighting alongside the town guard is a cakewalk compared to doing the fight solo in the woods.

Dhu Bleidd is so desirable as an armor enhancement because it grants a persistent +5 bonus to sign intensity, which is a bit like having the effects of a Petri's Philtre activated all the time. Any Geralt build that uses signs at all benefits from this bonus.

Note that Dhu Bleidd appears semi-randomly on the Scoia'tael in this quest, so you may not actually get to loot it from one of the Scoia'tael. It shows up a bit more regularly in the forest battle than in the battle with the guards but can be obtained in both fights. If you complete a battle and can't loot Dhu Bleidd from one of the bodies, then it's honestly worth repeating the quest until you get the drop. It's much easier to quickly repeat the battle with the town guards a few times than the battle in the woods.

You might think this quest is just named after the character, but this is actually an easter egg. Both the quest and the character are named in homage to the Italian film *Malena*, which is about the life of a character by the same name.

Side Quest: Troll Trouble

Take this quest off of the notice board outside the Flotsam inn. After you read the description, follow the quest marker to the collapsed bridge (also labeled in the guide map). Be ready for a fight as you travel, since the route takes you right through the edge of endrega territory. When you draw near the banks of the river, you should hear the sounds of a fight. A man armed with nothing but an oar is fighting off a small group of nekkers. Finish off the nekkers and then talk to him.

After you rescue him, the NPC fills you in on what's been going on with the troll. He suggests that the ruined bridge has something to do with a scheme by Loredo to keep the merchants from leaving Flotsam by land, since it's Loredo who's put a price on the troll's head. The NPC advises you to talk to Chorab in Lobinden before you make any rash moves against the troll, who has started drinking heavily. Head back to Lobinden.

When you find Chorab (who can be in several different places in the village depending on the time of day), talk to him. You can gather information about the troll or the kayran quest, but this is optional. To progress this quest, click the top option. Chorab explains that the troll maintains the bridge more cheaply than a craftsman would and just needs to be persuaded to stop drinking. He offers Geralt 200 orens not to kill the troll.

Head back to the ruined bridge and climb down into the riverside. Talk to the troll. What you say in this first conversation doesn't really matter. One way or another you piss off the troll and he begins attacking you. The troll is a very big and slow target. The easiest way to defeat him is to craft a big stack of well-balanced daggers, get behind him after the fight starts, and begin pelting him with them. You can also damage him with bombs, but the daggers whittle away his HP faster. This is much safer than trying to close to melee range with the troll, though you can do hefty damage if you get behind him.

Once the troll's vitality is down to 50 percent, he begs Geralt to stop the fight and promises to be good. Now you need to decide whether to kill or help the troll.

Caution

Later in the game, you have to decide whether to side with Iorveth or Roche. What you decide can have an impact on the two achievements related to whether you befriend or kill all of the trolls in your game. If you side with Roche, it becomes very difficult to unlock the achievement for befriending all trolls. In short, if you're pretty sure you're going to side with Roche, it's best to resolve this quest by killing the troll. If you really want to befriend all of the game's trolls, then you should side with Iorveth when the time comes.

If you decide to kill the troll, then resolving the quest is relatively simple. Say "Not good enough." The fight continues. You should finish the troll off without any further trouble. Be sure to loot his body to pick up a bunch of useful crafting drops and a troll trophy. You can head north of the troll's lair to loot a random sword that's stuck into the tree roots. Head back into Flotsam and go into Louis Merse's office. Begin a conversation and tell him the troll is dead. Merse pays you 50 orens and you get 125 XP for resolving the quest this way. Note that killing the troll counts toward one of the game's secret achievements.

If you decide to help the troll, this quest is much more lucrative but takes a lot longer to resolve. Say "What's with the heavy drinking?" The troll tells you about his mate, who was murdered and beheaded while he was out watching the bridge. Your response after that doesn't matter; either way Geralt promises to find out who murdered the she-troll to help put the troll's mind at ease. Before you head back to Flotsam, look in the tree roots just north of the troll's location for some loot.

First, go into town and speak to Síle and Zoltan, who can give you some extra information about who might want a troll's head and why. Your next stop is Lobinden. If you've had any dealings with Sendler, you may remember that he has a big huge head on his wall. Go talk to him about it and he says that he got the head from Dmitri. You need to go harass one of his men at the Flotsam inn after dark for more details. For now, offer to take the she-troll's head off Sendler's hands. Sendler doesn't want to part with it for any amount of orens. Instead, you have to beat him at dice poker.

Next, meditate until midnight and head into the Flotsam inn. The guy you want to speak with is drinking alone at a barrel at the center of the lower level. When you ask him about the troll, he balks at telling you anything. You can try to intimidate him into telling you, but if that fails you end up fistfighting him. Fortunately, this guy isn't difficult to beat at all. After you win, he tells you that you can find Dmitri at the graveyard above Lobinden.

Be prepared for a fairly challenging fight in tight quarters when you meet up with Dmitri. Dmitri's lackeys are nothing special, but Dmitri hits hard and has a ton of vitality. You can't really focus on damaging him until you've cleared out the four bandits that fight with him, but Dmitri keeps trying to attack you relentlessly.

At this point in the game you probably have enough levels that you can begin investing talents in specializing Geralt's abilities, so take advantage of whatever you've spent. In general, stunning bombs like Zerrikanian sun can be excellent here for crowd control. If you use Quen, then you can throw around dancing stars to take advantage of incineration's powerful effects on human enemies. Potions that intensify critical effects and sign strength are also quite good, particularly so you can use Axii to turn the bandits against each other early on. You're fighting human opponents, so oil your steel blade with hanged man's venom. Once you've defeated Dmitri and the bandits, be sure to loot the bodies and the body of the "elven spy" they did in. Dmitri in particular drops the bandit's hideout key, which you can use to access an interesting location.

Now that Dmitri's dead, go tell the troll the good news. Tell him that you've defeated his wife's murderers. The troll promises to stop drinking and fix the bridge. Give him back his wife's stuffed head and the troll rewards you with the diagram for hunter's armor. Sparing this troll also counts toward unlocking the Friend of Trolls achievement. The hunter's armor is an excellent set that you can make right away. While you acquire the slightly better kayran skin armor diagram just a little bit later in the chapter, it's very affordable to upgrade twice in this chapter if you've been looting everything diligently.

Now, go see Chorab to resolve the quest. Chorab backs down from his original offer and tries to give you only 100 orens. You can accept this if you want, but there's no reason to do so. Instead, try one of the special decision options to make him give you the full 200 orens you're owed. You can intimidate him (first option) or persuade him (second option). After Chorab pays you, you get the 125 XP reward for resolving the quest.

Note that either way you resolve this quest, you should get an alchemy item called a troll tongue. Hold on to this item and make sure you don't sell it or brew it into a potion by accident. You want to use it in a quest later on in this chapter.

Bandit's Hideout Key

If you resolved this quest by helping the troll, you're probably wondering exactly what you do with the key you looted from Dmitri's body. Well, you can use it to get into the bandit's hideout, a location you'd never stumble over by accident in the game. No quests ever take you there, so you might as well go pay a visit now and loot the place.

The bandit hideout is the little house you see in the far southwest corner of the blacked-in swampy area on the Chapter 1 area map. The trek there by itself isn't too dangerous. First head to the troll's broken bridge and climb down into the riverbank. Next, head upstream a little ways. You should find a ruined bridge that slopes gently down into the water. Climb up it to cross over the river and get into the swamps on the other side.

If you head into the swamps at night, expect to run into a lot of drowners. You may even run into groups of drowners led by their much more powerful cousins, the drowned dead. Drowners are very susceptible to stunning effects, so keep some samums or Zerrikanian suns at the ready. Also carry some necrophage oil. Drowned dead have a lot more vitality than the average drowner and hit very hard, so the damage bonus comes in handy if you stumble over some. You may want to pause just before crossing the river to drink some potions to boost your defense and make you more resistant to poisoning.

As you draw near the bandit hideout, you stumble on a dead body dangling from a tree limb. Be sure to check for loot underneath it, as you can find some superb well-balanced daggers that come in handy later on in the chapter. Once you're within sight of the hideout, you should see bandits patrolling the area. Bombs of all sorts are quite useful here, and you have ample opportunity to lay down traps. You can use Axii to turn the bandits against each other, too. Sometimes during the battle drowners crash the party. If so, the bandits may actually focus on fighting the drowners instead of you.

Once you've picked off all the bandits, loot the bodies and then head to the actual hideout, a wooden shack. Use the bandit's hideout key to enter. Inside is a chest stuffed with goodies, most notably a sun rune and the superb cutlass. The superb cutlass is probably better than what you're carrying now, so go ahead and equip it. You can loot some orens from another chest and pick up some random loot, too. Once you're done, head back to Flotsam.

The Kayran

There are more side quests to be done before we finish up with this chapter, but now it makes sense to go revisit the main plot for a bit. As you recall, Triss teleported off to go investigate the kayran's lair. Go catch up with her now. Have your steel sword at the ready, since the road to the kayran's lair is infested with bandits. Be sure to loot the chest of orens the second group of bandits is guarding.

Triss is waiting for you at the end of the footpath. Follow her down into the kayran's lair proper. Get your silver sword ready, as you're going to be ambushed by drowners. Five drowners may seem like a trivial battle with an assistant, but you can be killed here fairly easily. Oiling your blade with necrophage oil and keeping Quen up should see you through the fight. Zerrikanian suns are also useful here.

After the drowners are taken care of, head toward the enormous pile of green snot by the quest marker. Once you're close enough, you get a prompt to interact in order to collect mucus. This leads to a cutscene that opens up the side quest **The Kayran: Ostmurk** and gives you the mongoose formula. It's worth doing the Ostmurk side quest now, since the potion formula you get for completing it is very useful for things besides fighting the kayran. First, there's a side quest to trigger in this area, though.

When you examine the kayran's lair, you come across the grisly scene of a dead cobbler alongside an equally dead ram stuffed with sulfur. Geralt comments that this is "straight out of eastern legends." Actually, this is an easter egg. It references the Polish fairy tale *Dratewka the Cobbler*, by Janina Porazinska.

Side Quest: Mystic River

Head toward the wrecked ship at the far side of the pit that is the kayran's lair. Scan it with your medallion. You should find a skeleton you can examine and two chests. From the skeleton, you can loot the key of the *Petra Sile*'s captain. Next to it is a chest holding a modest sum of orens. Head farther up the boat to find a locked chest that you need the captain's key to open. Loot it for some modest crafting loot and a couple of interesting documents. Be sure to read both the captain's log and captain's report.

You can forward the documents, but you would need to find a drop box for the Royal Mail in Flotsam. Remember that locked chest on Louis Merse's desk? Go there. Stand next to the box and interact to insert the captain's report. Then talk to Merse and use Axii to convince him to let you open the box. Take Merse's report from the box and look it over. This is all you can do with the quest in this chapter, but you'll be able to continue it in the next chapter.

Side Quest: The Kayran: Ostmurk

Now to deal with more pressing matters. Head back to Lobinden and talk to Cedric. Ask him where you can find some ostmurk. He directs you to explore some caves to the south, beneath the elven ruins. Make any necessary preparations, then travel across the forest. Depending on luck and time of day, you can encounter nekkers, drowners, or Scoia'tael in the area around the cave. An encounter that's rare but very lucrative is Scoia'tael fighting a whole horde of nekkers, which lets you pick up all sorts of loot after you finish off the winning side.

Once you enter the cave, you are probably going to find yourself fighting a steady stream of nekkers and nekker warriors. There shouldn't be too many for you to deal with at once, but you may be halfway through the cave before you've picked them all off. Head right at the first fork so you can loot some robust well-balanced daggers off of a corpse. Prepare yourself for a fight before you climb up to the slightly elevated part of the cave.

A greater rotfiend waits beyond. While this enemy becomes trivial for you to fight later in the game, right now it may be overwhelming. Since there's only one, you can toss Quen up to mitigate damage and oil your silver sword with necrophage oil. Use strong attacks against it. After you reduce the rotfiend's vitality to 0, you see it tremble in place and scream. Quickly roll away from it before it explodes into a poisonous mess.

Just beyond the rotfiend, you find the ostmurk growing on a wall. Once you collect it, you can head out of the cave. On the way out, check the other fork in the upper area to find a mail enhancement on a corpse. For the last part of the quest you can do right now, head back to Flotsam and brew at least one Mongoose potion once you're there. You actually don't need ostmurk to make the potion; you can substitute any fulgur alchemy component for it. Mongoose comes in handy in the next side quest and, really, when fighting any enemy that uses poison. For the quest coming up, you'll want two Mongoose potions.

Side Quest: The Endrega Contract

Now that you've got Mongoose, you're finally ready to take on **The Endrega Contract**. To initiate the quest, go pick it up from the notice board outside the Flotsam inn. As with **The Nekker Contract**, go buy the relevant book about them from Einar Gausel and read it to learn about an endrega's weaknesses. Of course, you might have killed enough endregas already to have full knowledge of them. If so, then you can advance the quest by just reading the info on your character attributes screen. Next, gear up for the hunt. Fighting actual endregas should be simple for you by now, but to complete the quest you must kill two dangerous endrega queens. They are huge and have tons of vitality, so you can't just attack them relentlessly the way you do regular endregas. You need to be a bit sneakier.

First, make sure you're carrying a good complement of traps. Virtually any trap aside from fury traps works well here. If you've been picking snares up in the forest, they are both highly useful and completely free. Have a couple of applications of insectoid oil on hand. For potions, go with options that increase Geralt's defense. Mongoose, Swallow, and Brock can be a good combination, but plenty of others can work. You can also try using a Petri's Philtre to strengthen signs, if you play a more mage-oriented build. Finally, have an emergency supply of damaging bombs like grapeshot and throwing daggers on hand. Be sure to make enough stuff for two battles, because you have to kill two endrega queens to finish the quest.

Endrega queens only appear when endrega nurseries are threatened. There are two nurseries and you've probably passed by them before—they've got weird cocoon pods sitting around the trunk of an enormous tree. The locations of the two endrega nurseries are marked on the guide map, just in case you don't remember where they're located offhand. Expect to be attacked by endregas of all sorts as you draw nearer to the nurseries. Pick off every endrega in the area before summoning the queen. To summon the queen, open each of the three cocoon pods in the nursery and destroy them with sword blows. Be sure to loot them for endrega embryo drops. After you destroy the third cocoon pod, the endrega queen emerges.

When you've got a good supply of traps, use Quen as your default sign for extra defense. Don't engage the endrega queen, just make her chase you over the traps you've laid. You may be able to kill her without using your sword at all. She moves very quickly, so it can help to lay your traps in the nursery area before she appears. Once you have a feel for which direction she tends to approach you from, you can actually set your traps up so she has to walk over all of them before she can reach you.

If you run out of traps and she's still not dead, then switch your active sign to Yrden and coat your silver blade with insectoid oil. Start luring her over your Yrdens, then quickly roll up to her and hit her with a few strong strikes while she's stunned. After two or three blows, roll away before she can counterattack. A few volleys like this should finish her off if she's already limping from trap damage.

A final tactic you can try is kiting the endrega queen to the edge of her territory, standing just outside her reach, and pelting her with bombs or knives until she dies. It takes a ton of thrown weapons to pull this off, though, and if you misjudge the edge of her territory you may get Geralt killed.

Save after you defeat the first endrega queen. Be sure to loot her body, as she produces some very rare alchemy items and produces extremely useful mutagens. Return to town and craft more traps if you've run out of them. If you're using snares, you can just pick them up again to reuse later. Head out to the second endrega nursery. Repeat the tactics you used the first time. Now that you've had a little practice, you should find the second endrega queen a bit easier to defeat than the first one. Check the map and take advantage of any circles that happen to be near a nursery before you invade it.

Note

There's something fun you can try when fighting the endrega queen that guards the westernmost nursery. In this area, there's a cart near the nursery area that's just out of the endrega queen's reach. If you run around here a bit, you can get a pack of nekkers to chase you. Lead the nekkers into the endrega nursery where the angry queen is waiting for you. If you play your cards right, the queen gets bogged down fighting a group of hostile nekkers. You can sit back, watch, and then mop up the survivors.

Once both queens are dead, head back to Flotsam and see Louis Merse. Turn in **The Endrega Contract** by selecting the dialogue option about endregas. The quest should be worth 200 orens and 75 XP. When you turn in **The Endrega Contract**, you should get the diagram of the superb witcher's silver sword in addition to the promised orens if you also turned in **The Nekker Contract**. This sword is easy to make and is the best silver sword you can obtain in Chapter 1. It is recommended that you go ahead and make it, although it won't actually make a huge difference in any of the upcoming battles. It serves you very well early on in Chapter 2, though.

Since this is the final side quest you can get from the inn's notice board this chapter, you should be able to spot a hidden easter egg. Etched into the wood is a carving of a grey—an alien from urban legends that appeared in the *Area 51* video game.

The Kayran: A Matter of Price

Head down to the harbor and look for a merchant who's marked with a quest marker. You enter dialogue. The entirety of this quest comes down to negotiating to try and get a better price for your services. If you ask the merchant for an advance, he gives you 200 orens up front, no questions asked. This won't increase the reward after you kill the kayran, though.

If you ask the merchant to double the fee, he balks at your request. This opens up a set of four dialogue options you can use. The one you really want to try here is the Axii special option "You'll double the reward," which rewards you with the Haggling attribute after you've slain the kayran in addition to a doubled reward. You can also successfully get the merchant to double the reward by using the intimidation option, "Nuh-uh," but you can't get Haggling this way.

If you say "I'll tell Síle you're looking to cheat her," the merchant increases the reward but will not double it. At this point, you get another dialogue option that says "Gimme an advance" or "Fine." Regardless of what you say, it works like asking for an advance immediately. You get 200 orens up front.

If you say “Get back to me when you get tired of Flotsam,” either in the second dialogue or up front, it works like accusing the merchant of cheating Síle. The merchant agrees to increase the reward but won’t double it, then you get a dialogue option that lets you demand the 200 oren advance.

The Kayran

Now it’s time to go advance the plot a little by actually killing the kayran. This battle is more of an action-oriented challenge than one where your gear or skill makes a huge difference (though spending talents on Feet Work can make a difference). The only real preparations you’ll want to make are crafting the kayran trap with the part you got from **Indecent Proposal** and brewing a Mongoose potion to drink just before you start the battle. To craft the kayran trap, you need to purchase the diagram from Cedric at Lobinden.

When you’re ready to set out and do the deed, go talk to Síle in her room above the inn. She teleports you automatically to the ruined bridge above the kayran’s lair. After the dialogue, begin down the sloping path. Stop when you can see the bottom, meditate, and drink the Mongoose. When you approach the final drop-off, the game auto-saves and you’re automatically taken down into the basin.

Right now, you’re probably around level 10. No matter how you’ve invested your talents or what sort of armor you’re wearing, you can probably only take about three hits from the kayran before dying. Focus on learning the kayran’s movement patterns so you can evade it while luring it into doing the things you want it to do.

This also means there are a few things you absolutely don’t want to do. If you move too far around to the kayran’s left or right, as if trying to go behind it, the kayran counterattacks with a powerful horizontal sweep of its tentacle that knocks you away. This can set up a ghastly combo where you take a ton of damage from the horizontal sweep, then take extra damage from follow-up blows while you’re trying to get up. Likewise, if you move too far back from the kayran, you get tangled up in swamp weeds and have to press your interaction button rapidly to get free. You also get poisoned while doing this if you haven’t drunk Mongoose.

Here’s the ideal way to handle the battle: When the fight starts, you’re located at roughly six o’clock from the kayran. There are two tentacles in front of you, tentacles at five and four o’clock to your right, and tentacles at seven and eight o’clock to your left. We’re going to start working on eliminating the tentacles at seven and eight o’clock, but you can start with the four and five o’clock tentacles if that’s easier for you. Just follow the general strategy outlined here.

First, eliminate the seven o’clock tentacle. When the battle begins, one of the kayran’s six o’clock tentacles rises up. If you stand there stupidly, it will smash down on you, taking off over a third of your vitality. The best way to evade it is to dodge-roll as soon as you see the kayran telegraph its move. Try dodge-rolling once or twice to the right. The tentacle misses you.

When you move directly in front of the kayran, getting between the six o’clock tentacles, it begins to rear up and spit poison. The poison can’t hurt you because of the Mongoose potion you drank. Take this opportunity to run toward the glowing yellow indicator in front of the seven o’clock tentacle. That’s where you place the kayran trap. Just draw close to it and tap your interaction button to place it. What should happen next is that after the kayran finishes its poison spray, the seven o’clock tentacle rises up to try and smash you. Dodge-roll once or twice to the right.

If you placed the trap successfully, the kayran’s tentacle gets severed by it when it smashes down. Doing this successfully unlocks the Artful Dodger achievement.This takes about one-third off of the kayran’s vitality bar immediately. Quickly position Geralt so he’s standing in front of the severed tentacle stump. After you sever one of the kayran’s tentacles, it begins smashing everything around it in a frenzy of pain. If you’re standing in front of a severed tentacle, well, the kayran has nothing to smash you with.

After the kayran’s pain frenzy ends, move just a little bit to the left and place an Yrden. Ideally, what happens next is that the kayran raises its eight o’clock tentacle to prepare to smash you. Once again, dodge-roll to the right once or twice. When the kayran’s tentacle hits an Yrden, the tentacle gets stuck to it. When this happens, make your way over to the trapped tentacle as quickly as possible. Begin striking at the bulging, cancerous growth in the tentacle’s center with light attacks. After you hit it enough times, Geralt severs the tentacle. Have him remain where he's standing as the kayran enters another frenzy of pain. He should be safe from the flailing tentacles.

After the kayran's second frenzy ends, you enter a very tricky part of the battle. Basically, you need to switch sides so you can sever one of the tentacles opposite you (in this case, we want the five o'clock tentacle). The easiest way to do this is to dodge-roll to get quickly past the six o'clock tentacles. Once on the other side, try to orient yourself quickly. It is very easy to get smashed by a tentacle while you try to figure out where the kayran is in its attack animation cycle. Ideally, you get into position in the area the five o'clock tentacle guards and put down an Yrden without getting smashed. When the five o'clock tentacle goes up, dodge-roll to the left once or twice. Go sever this tentacle the same way you did the last one. The kayran enters another frenzy of pain you can avoid in the usual way.

Now you enter a series of QTEs that are what a tabletop gamer might call save-or-die situations. The kayran is going to sweep its remaining non-center tentacle, in this case the four o'clock tentacle, horizontally over the basin where you're fighting. Quickly press the strong attack button when prompted to make Geralt avoid damage by grabbing onto it. If you are not successful, Geralt is probably going to die instantly.

Once you're on the tentacle, you get another prompt, this time with the interaction button. You need to press it rapidly to fill up a meter, while the kayran waves you around. This shouldn't be difficult. The next button prompt has a tendency to be a killer, though. After you finish filling up the meter with the interaction button, be ready to hit the dodge button as soon as the prompt appears. If you hit it in time, then Geralt leaps off the tentacle before the kayran smashes down half the ruined bridge on itself. If you miss this prompt, Geralt gets smashed into the ruined bridge and dies instantly.

The rubble falls on the kayran such that it can no longer move, while also creating a giant stone ramp that leads up to its head. The kayran is going to defend the ramp with a pair of smashing tentacles, so you can't walk up it. You can, however, dodge-roll up it safely. Just make sure you don't get stuck on any of the terrain, and never stop dodge-rolling until you reach the top of the ramp. Generally the left side of the ramp is the easiest to roll up. When you reach the top of the ramp, Geralt crams a bomb into the kayran in a cutscene. The battle is over.

You get a whopping 1,750 XP for defeating the kayran and unlock the achievement Oh My God! You Killed The Kayran! You Bastards! You should level up at least once after that. **The Kayran: Ostmurk** automatically concludes after this battle if you drank Mongoose before the fight. Your reward for drinking the Mongoose first is the Strong Stomach attribute. Be sure to approach and loot the kayran's body for drops before you leave the area, too.

The Kayran: A Matter of Price

This quest technically doesn't conclude until you return to the merchant you negotiated with earlier. If you had the reward doubled, you get 1,000 orens. If you accepted the default reward, you get 500 orens. If you took one of the options that increased the reward but didn't double it, the number should be around 750 orens. So if you take the increase and an advance, you can get up to around 950 orens in total for killing the kayran, which only falls a little short of what you get for doubling the reward. That said, doubling the reward is overall the most lucrative way to go here, and it's very easy to do. Haggling reduces shop prices by 20 percent, making your store of orens go farther for the rest of the game.

In addition to the money, the diagram for kayran carapace armor should appear in your inventory after this. If you looted the kayran's body, you can now go make the best armor available in Chapter 1. Now is generally a good time to begin optimizing Geralt's equipment, since you should be able to afford the diagram of the jagged blade and should also have the 15 endrega teeth required to craft it. If you don't, you can buy them from Anezka or go grind endregas in the forest. You should also equip the kayran trophy, which gives you a far better bonus than any other trophy you can acquire at this point in the game. You can't improve your boots, gloves, or trousers much at this point, so don't worry about that for now. You should already have an optimal silver sword.

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As soon as you walk away from the merchant, Triss appears. She says that Iorveth's right-hand elf is being held on the prison barge and that he may know something about the kingslayer. After you've finished upgrading your gear, meet up with her in the harbor. Talk to the guards to gain entrance to the barge. The elf you want to speak with is in the hold. Before you can speak with him, you need to use Axii on him while Triss casts a healing spell. Press the interaction button to initiate this mini-game. Just press it repeatedly to fill up the meter.

Once he's awake, you can have a conversation with him. Regardless of the conversation options you pick, you're going to discover that Letho has turned against Iorveth's Scoia'tael unit, but Iorveth doesn't know it yet. You also find out that roses of remembrance grow nearby.

Returning Memories

After the conversation with Ciaran ends, Geralt recovers a bit more of his lost memory. Triss says that with a rose of remembrance, she could restore his memory completely. At this point, you can decide whether you take Triss on the next quest with you or not. If Triss goes with you, she can have a love scene with Geralt during the quest. If Geralt goes alone, this obviously is not going to happen, but he can still complete the quest normally. It's worth noting that there's an attribute you can obtain specifically by taking Triss with you on the next quest but then not making love to her.

The Rose of Remembrance

If you take Triss with you on the quest, you can simply follow her. If you insist on doing the quest without her, then you need to go to Lobinden before you set out for the elven ruins where the roses of remembrance grow. Cedric's an elf, so go ask him about the roses of remembrance.

When you do, you are prompted at one point in the conversation to give him vodka. If you do this, Geralt drinks with him and the screen goes all wobbly to indicate that hammering down vodka before a trek through a monster-infested forest is not actually a good idea. If you don't give Cedric vodka, he asks for orens to go buy some instead. You can give him up to 82 orens and should probably give him the maximum amount to make sure he tells you directions to the roses of remembrance. All told, it's cheaper and funnier to give him vodka instead.

Head south toward the waterfall, then look for the marker next to the path that leads up to the gardens. The roses of remembrance grow at the very top of the path, blooming violet on a bush in front of a giant statue. Pick one, then take it back to Triss at the Flotsam inn. After this you have a story conversation. You can say whatever you want in this one—it won't affect the outcome of the quest. You also won't get any XP for doing things this way.

Really, you're supposed to take Triss with you to the elven ruins. If you do things that way, then you get to the elven ruins by simply following her. After you pick a rose, you can choose to give it to Triss or not, which has no mechanical affect on the outcome of the quest. While you're in the garden, some bandits who intend to hack up part of the statues and haul them back to town appear. As usual, when you fight the bandits, Triss setting you on fire is a greater hazard than your actual enemies. Keep Quen up and it should be easy.

After you defeat the bandits, a cutscene drops you into the baths beneath the elven ruins. Begin by looking around for loot. A chest in a corner contains some random loot and a book about the Wild Hunt. Next, talk to Triss. If you say "Nothing. Let's get out of here," a dialogue ensues. For most of the dialogue you can say whatever you want, but agreeing with Triss in the very last dialogue tree, by saying "I guess so," results in you getting no XP for the quest. So when you get to the end of the dialogue with Triss, be sure to say whatever appears as the top option, usually "I can't" or "You know I can't." After the dialogue ends you get 250 XP. To get out of the elven baths, cast Aard on a false wall to the left of the pool. You don't do this the usual way; instead you get to cast it via an interaction prompt when you draw near it. After the wall is blasted, you get the rather potent

Resistance to Magic attribute.

After you climb out of the tunnel, you run across a pair of Scoia'tael elves and a dwarf. If you say "Let us leave in peace," you get another dialogue option after the elf asks you to identify the corpses. There are four options, including three special ones. If you try a special option and fail it, you find yourself in a battle with the three Scoia'tael, who...really don't stand a chance. Use Quen and break out your new jagged blade. When you loot the bodies, you can pick an armor enhancement off the dwarf.

If you try a special option and succeed, the leader of the Scoia'tael decides to let you go in peace. If you say "Show me what you've got," you go directly to a battle. Sometimes you can't loot the dwarf's body at all if you go directly to the main fight. After you win, you can just walk back to Flotsam.

Let's go back to the conversation in the elven bath. If you say "You could use a bath," then you trigger an elaborate love scene involving Triss and Geralt. The love scene makes the rest of the quest play out very differently. The Scoia'tael unit never encounters Geralt and Triss, since they're *cough* busy down in the bath level. Geralt doesn't get the Resistance to Magic attribute. When Triss and Geralt have their conversation later, you still need to make sure that your last decision is either "I can't" or "You know I can't," to get XP for finishing the quest.

After the conversation, in this chain of events, Roche arrives to break down the wall to the left of the bath. Once you're outside, you can return directly to Flotsam.

The most lucrative way to resolve this quest, by far, is to refuse Triss, make sure you get the quest XP at the end of their conversation, and kill the Scoia'tael waiting for you outside. Resistance to Magic is a very powerful attribute and really comes in handy later in the game. The chain of events you follow to obtain it, though, tends to leave Triss feeling pretty depressed. If you like Triss and want to see her in a good mood instead, trigger the love scene and just make sure to get the quest XP.

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Now go see Iorveth. This next sequence is crucial, so be sure you play through it carefully. First, be ready to fight an arachas. If you got the care package earlier in the game, you should already have a book about arachasae you can read to get knowledge of them. Make sure you have insectoid oil on hand. When you're ready to set out, speak with Zoltan at the Flotsam inn. He begins leading you to an area where you can meet Iorveth.

The passwords the Scoia'tael are using might sound familiar. Kierkegaard and Heidegger are references to the famous philosophers, Soren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger.

As you follow Zoltan through the forest, you have an opportunity to pass through a circle of vigor, circle of endurance, and a circle of life. Do this and you shouldn't need to prepare any potions for the arachas battle—just use some insectoid oil and make sure you keep Quen up at all times. If you invested in Feet Work for the kayran battle, that trait comes in handy here, too.

Just dodge-roll to get to the arachas's back or sides and lay into it with strong blows. The arachas tends not to block but will try to angle its front at you so it can counterattack. When Quen goes down, roll away from the arachas, refresh it, and wade back into the battle. Zoltan helps distract it during the fight so you should have no trouble getting blows in. After the arachas dies, if you're lucky you can loot it quickly before the cutscenes start.

After the arachas dies, the Scoia'tael emerge and you enter a dialogue scene. Throughout this dialogue scene, you can say whatever you want—provided you don't say something that pisses Iorveth off. If you do, then his men decide to fill you full of arrows. Geralt and Zoltan die in a cutscene. Time to reload!

So here's a guide to what not to say to Iorveth, since as long as he's not pissed off what you say will inevitably progress the plot. At the first dialogue option, do not say "You're a murderer." If you choose "Let Zoltan go," then do not say "Loredo was right about you" at the next branch of the conversation.

Once you say "Letho wants you dead" at any dialogue branch, you trigger a cutscene that leads to Iorveth's men lowering their bows. After that you can say what you like. When you get to the final branch in the conversation, though, be sure to say "I need to do something first." Do not say "Let's go," as that takes you directly into a dangerous battle.

If you say "I need to do something first," Iorveth goes to wait for you at the elven ruins. Now, be sure to scan the meeting place very carefully for loot. If you failed to loot the arachas's body before the cutscene, be sure to do it now. Among the loot should be a pair of arachas eyes you should hold onto for use in a later quest. Also, search the clearing carefully for the sword of Kaer Morhen. Its location is marked on the map to make it a bit easier to find. It is the second-best silver sword available in Chapter 1 and essential if you missed getting the diagram of the superb witcher's silver sword earlier. Note that you can't obtain it before you do this quest as part of **The Assassins of Kings**. If you try to head to this area earlier in the game, rocks block all of the available paths.

After you're done looting the clearing, head back to Flotsam. There's one last side quest you want to clear before moving the storyline forward. You should also focus on buying anything from the vendors at this point that you might want. After the battle, you have to make a decision that branches the main plot a little and causes certain vendors in Flotsam to shut down. So it's best to have everything you might want to obtain in your inventory before you go off to face Letho.

Side Quest: Melitele's Heart

Remember that amulet you got from Newboy in the Prologue? Go see Anezka at Lobinden about it. Say "Tell me what you know about this amulet" to initiate the quest. She says there's real magic in it and offers to buy it from you. If you say "I wouldn't mind selling it," a cutscene ensues where Geralt and Anezka haggle on price. Generally she settles on a final offer of 200 orens for it. If you say "I want to get rid of it," Geralt accepts the sale and trades away Newboy's talisman for 200 orens. This resolves the quest and nets you 50 XP. "What's your final offer?" in the final dialogue branch makes Anezka restate her price, while "I've changed my mind" stops the sale sequence.

If you say "It must be precious to you," you trigger a cutscene that leads to another dialogue branch. At the branch, if you say "I need to ask you something else," you terminate this entire sequence. What you want to do instead is use the persuasion special option above it: "A customer like me doesn't come along often…"

If your persuasion is successful (and it probably will be), Anezka reveals that the talisman is actually Melitele's Heart, a potent protective amulet that was cursed. The curse distorts its effect, so it actually brings misfortune upon those who carry it. Anezka wants it because she thinks she could undo the curse, provided she had the right alchemical ingredients. She needs a troll tongue, a pair of arachas eyes, essence of death, and an endrega embryo. Although Anezka refers to an endrega fetus in her dialogue, it's the endrega embryo alchemy item that she requires.

If you've side-quested diligently up to this point, you should have all of these items. You get the troll tongue resolving **Troll Trouble**, the arachas eyes from **The Assassins of Kings** sequence earlier, essence of death from the wraiths you battle during **In the Claws of Madness**, and endrega embryos while you're raiding the endrega nurseries during **The Endrega Contract**. If you did something foolish like wasting your troll tongue to brew a potion, you can go buy replacements from Cedric. You can't buy a replacement for the endrega embryo, though. If you somehow wasted all of them, go farm endregas for a while.

When you're ready to lift the curse on the talisman, visit Anezka and say "I'm interested in that ritual" after you ask about the talisman. Next, ask her if she can conduct the ritual. Anezka tells you to go to the statue of Veyopatis at midnight. Say "I've made up my mind" to initiate this part of the quest. If you are speaking to Anezka after sundown, you can follow her to the statue. When she asks you if you're ready, don't say "I am" unless you're genuinely ready for a pretty fearsome battle.

When Anezka begins performing the ritual, she summons a series of wraiths around her. The wraiths spawn infinitely, but you only have to fight three at a time. You need to hold off the wraiths while she performs the ritual. If she stops performing the ritual, then it's possible for you to be stuck fighting infinitely respawning wraiths until dawn. To prepare for this fight, you definitely want some specter oil on hand. Both Quen and Axii are useful here, Axii to turn the wraiths against each other and Quen for defense. A very prudent approach can be to use Quen and lay fury traps around the area, which can affect a whole group of wraiths at once.

Make sure you have the chapter's optimal equipment and all of your talents invested. If you have any mutagens worth slotting, go ahead and spend them. You may want to socket +2 enhancements into your armor and socket your silver sword with runes. The best rune overall for socketing is the fire rune, which exploits wraiths' weakness to incineration while increasing overall damage. You probably only have one fire rune, though, and they're difficult to acquire at this point in the game. If you decide you want to save your fire rune for later in the game or for use in a steel sword, a sun rune or moon rune can also be very useful.

If you focus on using Axii on the wraiths, you may want to create some dancing stars to help with crowd control when your vigor is low. For potions, you'll probably want a combination along the lines of Petri's Philtre, Swallow, and Tawny Owl. It's actually worth spending some fulgur to make a Tawny Owl for this, if you've got the alchemy components to spare. This battle is a candidate for the toughest in the chapter, and how you prepare makes a big difference in how it turns out. Also take advantage of the circle of endurance and circle of power near where the fight is to take place.

How many wraiths you kill is immaterial to success or failure here. You just need to keep the fight from getting anywhere near Anezka, which is why it's useful to have optimized equipment going into the battle. The tougher your stats are, the more trivial the wraiths are as opponents.

Killing wraiths is helpful, since that means they have to spend time respawning far from the ritual rather than stabbing you or Anezka. Run around, keep Quen up, and do what you can to manage the crowd of wraiths. Bombs, fury traps, Axii—whatever happens to work best for your build. This is the first major fight in the game where how you handle it will depend more on how you've built Geralt than the basic characteristics of the enemies. Expect a lot more fights like this in Chapter 2.

When Anezka says "I've done it!" the battle is over. Ask her if the ritual was successful. If it wasn't, you can try again. If it was, then she gives you the restored Melitele's Heart to reward you for helping her lift the curse. Now Melitele's Heart gives Geralt perpetual +1 vitality regeneration, without even needing to be equipped. You also get 125 XP for resolving the quest this way. Go loot the wraith remains and prepare yourself for another tough battle.

The Assassins of Kings

It's time to go have a talk with Letho. There's a dialogue before you fight him. For most of it you can say whatever you want. One way or another, Iorveth is going to order the Scoia'tael into action and you're going to end up battling Letho.

Just before you battle Letho, you have a timed decision to either give Iorveth his sword or help Roche. What you decide here forks the plot for a little bit in Chapter 1, affecting the way the beginning of **Where Is Triss Merigold?** plays out. It is not the chapter's most important decision, but it can have consequences in Chapter 2.

If you give Iorveth his sword, you've sided with him and should read the **Where Is Triss Merigold? (Iorveth)** description after the Letho battle. If you help Roche, you've sided with him and should read the **Where Is Triss Merigold? (Roche)** description.

It's worth noting up front that siding with Roche here offers slightly more XP. That is otherwise the only substantial difference between the two branches. The main differences are all pure matters of how the story unfolds. It's also worth noting that on both branches, regardless of your choice, you lose access to Berthold, Einar, Fioravanti, and Cedric's shops.

Finally, after you finish **Where Is Triss Merigold?**, the game auto-tracks quests based on the decision you make here. If you sided with Iorveth, then **At a Crossroads: Scoia'tael** is auto-tracked. If you side with Roche, then **At a Crossroads: Vernon Roche** is auto-tracked. You can still choose to track the other **At a Crossroads** quest if you wish, so you can make a final decision to side with Iorveth or Roche that's totally the opposite of what you pick here.

Anyway, back to Letho. His vulnerability is Yrden and traps, somewhat similar to the endrega queens, so your snares can come in handy here. The problem with fighting Letho is that he's also a witcher, so he has all of your abilities. He uses Quen on himself, uses Aard to knock you over, and throws bombs if you get too far away from him. You can use thrown daggers to interrupt his casting and throwing animations if you've got quick reflexes, which can make taking a bunch of well-balanced throwing daggers into this fight worthwhile.

Again, the better your equipment here is, and the more you've built up Geralt with talents, the easier Letho is going to be to defeat. Make sure you've socketed runes into your steel sword before the battle. The jagged blade has two rune slots, so the optimal runes to slot would be your fire rune and earth rune. That said, these runes are rare and difficult to obtain, so you may want to save them for later in the game. If so, then any combination of Ysgith, sun, and moon runes can help give you an edge here.

Complicating matters is that your potion meters are ticking down during the dialogue before the Letho fight. Even if you prepare your potions and drink them at the last possible moment before triggering the fight, chances are you only have about three minutes left on them before the battle begins (unless you've taken the alchemy skill Specialization: Potions). If you've somehow made a build that is super-reliant on potions, you will have problems. Geralt builds that are heavy on alchemy should be sticking to bombs and traps here.

It's still worth drinking some potions—just make good use of those three minutes. Also try to use easier-to-brew potions like Rook here, rather than ones that use rare ingredients, like Tawny Owl. It's not worth sacrificing rare ingredients for only three minutes or so of actual use. Also, don't oil your steel sword with hanged man's venom until after the fight with Letho begins. You can do that from the inventory screen, fortunately.

When Letho puts up Quen, keep a little distance away from him. Don't waste attacks on battering it down, just let it run out. Plant traps or Yrdens instead. Don't get too far away, or he punishes you with a bomb, Aard, or Igni. Wait for his Quen to run out before you get serious about attacking him, or rush him after the damage from a snare knocks it down. If you're using daggers, try to interrupt him when he begins the animation for casting it, Aard, or Igni.

Don't rush in and attack him with your sword blindly. Instead, wait to catch him in a situation where he can't block. That means hitting him during casting or throwing animations, getting behind him, or going after him when he's staggered. You can stagger Letho by blocking his sword blows, like other humanoid opponents, or luring him onto an Yrden. Once you land a few blows on Letho, it's easy to stay on top of him and keep him trying to attack you rather than putting up Quen. Letho isn't all that fast compared to you, so heavy blows work well here.

You only have to take Letho down to about 50 percent vitality to count as having won the battle, so don't be alarmed if it looks like the damage you do is puny. If you exploit Geralt's strengths and Letho's weaknesses, chances are you'll prevail. After the battle, you immediately see the results of the choice you made earlier.

Where Is Triss Merigold? (Iorveth)

Iorveth appears in the cutscene after Letho leaves, asking what happened to him. Letho is headed to Flotsam to get Triss, and Iorveth implores you to kill him before he gets there. Geralt asks Iorveth to set out with him, but Iorveth reminds Geralt that he can't do anything given the garrison stationed there. You're on your own for finding Triss.

Before you leave the elven baths, make sure you loot the area. Pick up your snares if you used them and make sure to retrieve the sword you lost in the final cutscene with Letho. You can also find a little bag of loot Letho leaves behind. It contains grapeshot, dancing stars, and a robust long sword. There's also a chest containing random loot nearby. Outside, loot the bodies of the fallen.

If you're overburdened with loot, stop in Lobinden to trade with Anezka or Sendler. When you get into Flotsam, madness has erupted. The battle between the Scoia'tael and the Blue Stripes has become Loredo's long-desired catalyst for inciting the humans into open violence against the Flotsam nonhumans. Angry mobs are assaulting nonhumans.

Your first goal here is to get to the inn, but you can stop to interrupt the various beatings and other acts of mob violence you see around them. You can usually try to quell them with special decisions in a dialogue, or by just getting your sword out and killing the mob. Once you're in the inn, you have to save Dandelion from a similar situation.

You can use Axii or intimidation to convince the innkeeper not to kill Dandelion, or you can kill him and his allies. You don't get any noteworthy loot for killing the townsfolk, so it's quicker to bypass the fights if you can. By this point in the game you should be particularly good at using either Axii or intimidation in conversations. Just stick with whatever you're best at when you're trying to quell fights.

Talk to Dandelion about what's going on. Ask him "Have you seen Triss?" when you want to advance the plot. Head to Síle's room to find out what happened next. The room is a wreck, so examine it for clues. Eventually, you should find the peephole that leads into the brothel. Go next door to see if the madam knows anything.

Once you're there, talk to Margot. One of her elven girls, Derae, was murdered by the mob. Margot lets you know what happened to Triss in the room and you get a cutscene of Triss's conversation with Philippa. During the cutscene you can make conversation choices, but none of them affect the plot. They just give you a little more information about what's going on. After the scene with Triss and Philippa, Margot mentions that she saw Cedric stagger out toward the forest. Margot also gives you a letter for Iorveth naming Derae's killers. You can take it by asking her if she's spying for Iorveth. The other two conversation options lead to her keeping the letter. The letter doesn't affect the plot in any way but is interesting reading.

Head out into the forest to find Cedric. If you want, you can drink a Cat potion and follow a blood trail from Lobinden to where Cedric lies in the forest. If you'd rather not use Cat, just head toward the elven ruins and you can easily find him nearby just by scanning with your medallion. When you find him, a cutscene begins where Cedric tells you what happened with Triss and Letho. Following that, there's a brief dialogue with Dandelion and Zoltan. After that dialogue, you get 900 XP and the quest resolves for now.

At this point, the mutually exclusive quests **At a Crossroads: Scoia'tael** and **At a Crossroads: Vernon Roche** open up. If you do the Scoia'tael version of the quest, you side with Iorveth in Chapter 2 and get a set of quests and locations specific to that. If you do the Vernon Roche version of the quest, you get a largely different set of quests and locations. If you want to side with Iorveth, see the walkthrough for **At a Crossroads: Scoia'tael**. If you want to side with Roche, see the walkthrough for **At a Crossroads: Vernon Roche**. Whether you do Iorveth or Roche's quest is the most important decision you make this chapter.

Before you decide either way, linger near Cedric long enough to loot his body. (C'mon, he'd want you to have his stuff.) You can pick up elven armor and reinforced boots. Neither is particularly useful, but the elven armor is otherwise fairly difficult to obtain.

Where Is Triss Merigold? (Roche)

Roche appears in the cutscene after Letho leaves, asking what happened to him. Letho is headed to Flotsam to get Triss, and Roche agrees to help you try to get to her first. In the conversation, Roche reveals that the Blue Stripes were able to take

Iorveth prisoner.

Before you leave the elven baths, make sure you loot the area. Pick up your snares if you used them and make sure to retrieve the sword you lost in the final cutscene with Letho. You can also find a little bag of loot Letho leaves behind. It contains grapeshot, dancing stars, and a robust long sword. There's also a chest containing random loot. Outside, loot the bodies of the fallen.

This time, Roche and Geralt return to a hero's welcome in Flotsam, since they captured the hated Iorveth. At one point Loredo offers you a drink. If you take it, you can get the screen wobble effect that indicates drunkenness in *The Witcher 2*. There's no penalty for turning it down, but you don't have a lot of chances to get Geralt drunk in this game. After the encounter with Loredo, head into the inn and meet Dandelion. You have another chance to have a drink or turn it down.

Next, go to investigate Síle's room. The room is a wreck, so examine it for clues. Eventually, you should find the peephole that leads into the brothel. Go next door to see if the prostitute waiting there knows what happened. At this point you should receive 100 XP for successfully investigating the room.

Have a talk with the woman who's waiting there, Derae. She confirms that Triss and Cedric were next door in Síle's room earlier. This triggers a cutscene of Triss's conversation with Dethmold. During the cutscene you can make conversation choices, but none of them affect the plot. They just give you a little more information about what's going on. Note that when you get to either persuade or intimidate Dethmold with a special conversation option, Triss uses Geralt's levels in those skills. So for that conversation option, pick whatever Geralt is currently best at if you want to get extra information.

After the scene with Triss and Dethmold, Derae mentions that Margot went missing and also that she saw Cedric stagger out toward the forest. While you'll need to find Cedric to complete this quest, go finish the sub-quest with Margot first. Note that it is skippable and therefore technically a side quest.

Side Quest: Margot's Disappearance

Basically, just go downstairs into Margot's usual room in the brothel wing of the inn. You discover Dandelion there, staring at Margot's body hanging from a rafter. On the ground beneath her is Margot's farewell letter, which you can pick up and read to understand why she killed herself. Margot was spying for Iorveth and figured that her goose was cooked once Iorveth was captured. You can also loot Margot's room to find her notes. They usually appear in the end table next to her bed. You get no XP for resolving this quest, just extra information about the plot.

Where Is Triss Merigold? (Roche)

Head out into the forest to find Cedric. You can find him by using a Cat potion and following a blood trail from Lobinden to where Cedric lies in the forest, but you may not want to do that on this branch of the plot. The minute you set foot into the forest, you'll be attacked by an angry unit of about five Scoia'tael. They shouldn't be hard to beat at Geralt's current level, but if you've already drunk Cat the fight becomes very annoying due to the damage penalty and Geralt's altered vision. Remember that Axii and similar effects are very useful when dealing with large groups of enemies.

To find Cedric without using Cat, just head toward the elven ruins. You can easily find him nearby just by scanning with your medallion, which reveals Cedric's bloodstains. When you find him, a cutscene begins where Cedric tells you what happened with Triss and Letho. Following that, there's a brief dialogue with Dandelion and Zoltan. After that dialogue, you get 900 XP and the quest resolves for now.

At this point, the mutually exclusive quests **At a Crossroads: Scoia'tael** and **At a Crossroads: Vernon Roche** open up. If you do the Scoia'tael version of the quest, you side with Iorveth in Chapter 2 and get a set of quests and locations specific to that. If you do the Vernon Roche version of the quest, you get a largely different set of quests and locations. If you want to side with

Iorveth, read on for the walkthrough for At a Crossroads: Scoia'tael. If you want to side with Roche, see the walkthrough for **At a Crossroads: Vernon Roche**.

Before you decide either way, linger near Cedric long enough to loot his body. (C'mon, he'd want you to have his stuff.) You can pick up elven armor and reinforced boots. Neither is particularly useful, but the elven armor is otherwise fairly difficult to obtain.

The title of this quest is actually one of the game's easter eggs. It's meant as a reference to the Carmen Sandiego series of educational PC games, which always had titles along the lines of "Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?"

At a Crossroads: Scoia'tael

This quest can be very different depending on if you sided with Iorveth or Roche just before the fight with Letho. If you sided with Roche, you meet with Zoltan in the elven ruins and a small detachment of Scoia'tael NPCs. They're harsh to Geralt, but after you say "I want to help the Scoia'tael," don't worry about saying something to put yourself on bad terms with the Scoia'tael again. Ultimately, they decide that if you help them free Iorveth from the prison barge you've proved that you're on their side. You get 50 XP for resolving the quest.

If you sided with Iorveth before your fight with Letho, then it's him you meet in the elven ruins. You get different options during the dialogue, mainly ones that let you acquire a little bit more information. Once you give Iorveth the "Count me in" dialogue option, the quest resolves. You get 50 XP. On this branch, your next quest is **The Floating Prison**, which ends Chapter 1.

The Floating Prison

The first half of this mission is only slightly different, depending on whether Iorveth is with you or if you're rescuing Iorveth. If you're rescuing Iorveth, then a dwarf leads your party as you begin climbing the cliffs around the city so you can get to the harbor in secret. If Iorveth is with you, then he leads the party instead.

If you do the version of this quest where Iorveth leads the party, you can uncover one of the game's many easter eggs referencing *Lord of the Rings*. One of your dialogue choices here can cause Iorveth to mention the phrase "a piece of lembas," much to Geralt's befuddlement.

As you make your way around Flotsam, you encounter small groups of guards. You should be able to overpower them easily with the help of the Scoia'tael NPCs with you; just keep Quen up for defense. The guards all drop short swords and sometimes a few orens. You should fight about three groups of them as you make your way up the cliffs, and you have a chance to activate a circle of vigor.

Once you reach the top of the cliffs, you see that the other group of Scoia'tael has flooded the harbor and is battling the guards en masse. Rush down with your group and start cutting up the guards near you. When they cluster together, you can make good use of bombs like dancing star, but be careful not to set your own allies on fire. When you run into the burly guards in Loredo's livery, you need to take a more methodical approach to fighting. A block-and-counter approach works, with the Riposte skill being quite powerful if you've invested in it and gotten the hang of its timing.

Once you get onto the boat, you need to slay all of the guards aboard. If Iorveth is with you, you seize control of it automatically after the guards are wasted. If you're rescuing him, then you need to rescue him before you have control of the ship. Iorveth stands at the aft of the ship. Approach him to get an interaction prompt that releases him.

Once the ship is in motion, Loredo threatens to burn down a building with some elven women trapped inside if the boat doesn't stop. Instead of the boat stopping, Geralt hops out to mete out some justice, which sends Loredo running. At this point, you can do one of the two things: rescue the elven hostages or kill Loredo.

If you choose to rescue the elven hostages, you need to fight your way around to the entrance to the building where they're being held. There are two guards you have to take out, and you may end up fighting a handful of peasants, too. If you have optimal equipment, these fights should be trivial.

Quickly get inside the building. Put up Quen to protect Geralt from the fire and start climbing the ladders. Once you're inside you're on a timer to finish this part of the quest, and if you take too long, the building collapses in a fiery mess, killing Geralt and everyone else inside. When you get to the top, move near the three hostages. Stand near them and begin hammering your interaction button to fill up the meter that lets you release each of them. Once you've released all three, you automatically get a cutscene where you leap out of the tower to safety. Be sure to get well away from the top of the ladder before you start trying to release the hostage nearest it.

If you choose to hunt down Loredo, chase him down the docks and into Flotsam's town square. You have to fight all the way, both peasants and ordinary town guards. These fights should be trivial for you with your current equipment. Take the door that leads from the harbor into the town square. Loredo waits for you there with five of his personal guards and a town guard armed with a sword and heavy shield. You have to contend with Loredo's personal guards before he comes down from the gallows to fight you himself.

Loredo's personal guards are the main challenge here, because they all have the sort of AI that tends to block a lot. If you have dancing stars, then tossing one or two into a group of them can rapidly whittle down their vitality. You can also use typical crowd control techniques like Axii and fury traps. Once you've thinned the guards' numbers down a little, you can finish them off with some old-fashioned sword-fighting. You can take the town guard out with a block-and-counter approach, since he doesn't enter the fray until Loredo's personal guards are gone. Loredo himself should be trivial to defeat. Once Loredo is dead, you can loot his body for a ton of items, including a studded leather reinforcement and the Royal Mail key.

Now you need to head back to the harbor to get back on the prison barge. Head to the very end of the dock, then stand toward the right side of it. You should get an interaction prompt to use the rowboat beneath you. This triggers a cutscene that places Geralt automatically back on the prison barge.

At the very end of this quest, if you ask about Roche right before Iorveth says it's time to set sail, you can see a special cutscene depicting Iorveth's encounter with him. Then you briefly take control of Iorveth and get to fight Roche in a brief battle, which leads into another cutscene. Note that you can get this cutscene whether Iorveth was imprisoned or not.

So which way is best for resolving the quest? Well, the best loot you get from slaying Loredo is a studded leather reinforcement, which you can buy freely in Chapter 2. If you rescue the elven hostages, then among them is Mottle, who becomes a shopkeeper in Chapter 2. She can also have a romantic encounter with Geralt if she survives and gives him a useful item. If you opt to kill Loredo, she's not available in Chapter 2 at all. So overall, it's best to try rescuing the elven hostages. That said, it's also worth killing Loredo just once to hear Iorveth's amazing rant in the cutscene that follows. At the chapter's end, you should get the To Aedirn! achievement. After this, begin the walkthrough for Chapter 2 with Iorveth as Geralt's ally.

At a Crossroads: Vernon Roche

This is very straightforward. Meet with Roche at the Blue Stripes headquarters in Flotsam. He reveals that Loredo is in bed with spies from the rival nation of Kaedwen. Roche plans to execute Loredo as a traitor and insists that Geralt help him assault Loredo's compound before they sail for Aedirn. Say "All right, let's do it your way" and you've sided with Roche. Note that you get no XP for resolving this quest.

If you side with Iorveth just before the battle with Loredo and then do this quest, the only real difference is some extra dialogue that happens before Roche divulges his intentions for Loredo. Roche chews out Geralt for giving Iorveth a sword and will answer a few questions about how the riot in Flotsam got started. You don't get any XP for resolving this version of the quest.

Death to the Traitor!

It's time for Loredo to pay for his crimes. Note that who you sided with earlier before you fought Letho doesn't really affect the way this quest plays out. Roche orders everyone to meet in an alley after dark to do this quest, so you may want to take advantage of the break to lighten Geralt's load by selling stuff off or putting it into storage. Loredo's house is absolutely stuffed with loot you'll want to carry out.

What the game tells you to do is basically a stealth mission. In the alley where you meet Roche's man, there's a ladder. You need to go to this location at night to use the ladder. If you arrive during the day, you're told to come back later. Climb it to get onto a plank you can use to drop down into Loredo's compound. A merchant is walking nearby, looking for a girl named Helen. Wait until his back is toward you. You can choose to sneak by him or to knock him out. He's very easy to knock out, so you might as well. Now you need to find Helen. Sneak toward the center of the map. Wait until the guard patrolling the center of the courtyard has his back turned. Run and hide behind the woodpile.

Move around it, then head for the guard off to your right. Stun him when his back is turned. This lets you climb the ladder that lets you drop down into the courtyard where you snagged the part for the kayran trap earlier. You can have a talk with Helen here. She fills you in on what's happened with Ves and tells you that to get farther into the compound, you need to get a key from Loredo's mother.

If you're not a fan of stealth, there's another way to get into Loredo's mansion. Remember the trap door at the end of the nekker cave you investigated during the **Malena** side quest? Try going back in there. Fight your way through the nekkers, which should be much easier now that you've begun to invest some talents in Geralt's specialized abilities. While the trap door was locked earlier, this time you can pass through it easily. You may encounter a guard on his way down the ladder. Passing through the trap door puts you in the little walled courtyard where Helen waits, so you can talk to her to proceed with the quest normally from here. You're awarded an additional 400 XP for entering the compound through the nekker cave, so this is really the best way to do the beginning of this quest.

Climb up the low wooden platform and then into Loredo's compound through an open window. This puts you in the kitchen. Scan the area, not so much for loot but for objects that make noise if you bump into them. There's a guard in the hallway that leads out of the kitchen you probably want to knock out. Wait until he's standing at the bottom of the stairs with your back toward you, then sneak up on him and crack him on the back of the head. Open the door with the quest marker behind it—the other one leads outside, where you really don't want to be right now.

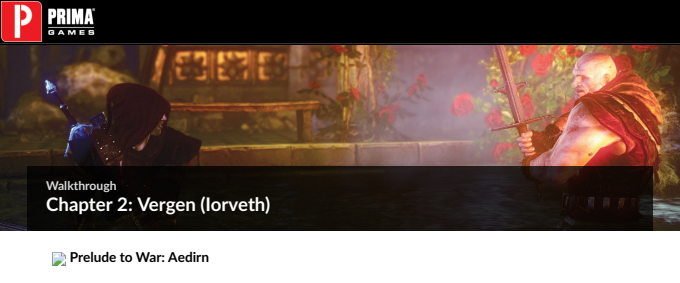
Loredo's mother waits in this room, distilling fisstech. Be ready for a QTE when the cutscene begins. Loredo's mother tries to attack you with a knife, so you must press the interaction button to successfully counter her attack. This is one of the game's more forgiving QTEs, fortunately. Loot the room once Loredo's mother is dead, so the drunkenness effect from the fisstech she threw at you can wear off. Be sure to loot her body to get Marietta's key, which you need for sneaking your way up the main tower.

Now that you have Marietta's key, you don't really need to worry about sneaking around anymore. The next floor takes you to Loredo's office. You can try knocking all the guards out stealthily, but chances are you're going to be seen here. Go ahead and kill them so you can loot this room. Unlock the glittering box near the door to get Bernard Loredo's letter, which contains information confirming everything Roche alleged about Loredo. Obtaining this document also advances **Mystic River** but isn't required to finish that side quest.

The next level is a room full of sleeping guards. You can try to sneak through it to get the tower key in the chest in the next room, or you can just wake the guards up and fight them all. Winning this battle shouldn't be difficult, even given the tight quarters, provided you're starting to specialize your Geralt build for combat. Even if you aren't, some bombs can do terrible things to enemies in a tightly packed area like this. Head on up to the next level of the tower.

Here is where Loredo is lying in wait for you, with a trap. Hit the interaction button when the prompt appears in the middle of the screen to deflect Loredo's spear charge. After that, you begin a proper fight with him. Loredo's huge spear actually makes him very easy to defeat, because his blows are so slow. It's easy to use the Riposte skill on him, or just use Quen to make staggering him easy. If you use light attacks on him, it's also very easy to back him into a corner and catch him in perpetual hit-stun until he dies. Free Ves after Loredo dies (use the strong attack button prompt), then loot Loredo's body to pick up some nice armor enhancements and the Royal Mail key. Be sure to loot the room before you head next door to find Moril.

Lead Moril down a couple of flights of steps. Her water breaks, which means she has to go back to the tower to deliver her baby. In the meantime, Geralt needs to kill the guards on the ground floor of the compound, then head out into the courtyard to help Roche's men mop up the rest of Loredo's forces. These fights should be fairly trivial. When Geralt asks Roche what kept him, you get a cutscene where Roche briefly encounters Iorveth, followed by a battle where you get to control Roche as he duels Iorveth. From here, cutscenes take you into the beginning of Chapter 2 and you should unlock the To Aedirn! achievement.



Walkthrough

Chapter 2: Vergen (Iorveth)

Prelude to War: Aedirn

While the bulk of this chapter takes place south of the Pontar, in Vergen, we begin in a cutscene where we see Saskia and her forces going to a parley with King Henselt of Kaedwen. You control Prince Stennis of Vengerberg in this sequence. As Stennis, the conversation options you select determine how this sequence plays out.

Basically, you can either get into a free-for-all battle with the Kaedweni forces or end up dueling Henselt. Dueling Henselt is much easier and is only an option if Stennis's dialogue replies are good enough to impress Henselt. If you fail to impress Henselt, then Saskia steps in to take over the negotiations. Henselt profoundly disrespects her, so the moment she opens her mouth you can expect the free-for-all battle version of events to unfold.

If you take the second option in the first dialogue branch, "You'll break all the treaties," you immediately lose Henselt's favor and can shortly expect to fight all his men. To draw out the conversation, always pick the top option, "Greater forces have crumbled beneath Vergen's walls." At the next branch in the conversation, you may pick the first or second option to continue the conversation onto its third branch. The third option, "I am forced to accept your terms," leads to Saskia speaking and initiates the mass melee.

From the third branch, selecting the first option, "Withdraw your army and you'll save them from being massacred," insults Henselt and immediately triggers the free-for-all battle. Selecting "I'll reimburse you for your military escapade" triggers the dialogue that makes Henselt offer Stennis a duel to settle matters. The third option, "I'll give you the Dragonslayer," once again triggers Saskia's speech and leads immediately to the mass melee. To duel Henselt, say "I accept your challenge" after the duel is offered. If you say "I'm not prepared to fight," then the mass melee begins.

If You Duel Henselt

Stennis can't throw up Quen, but he still has plenty of vitality. You can simply guard Henselt's blows and then counter them while Henselt staggers. Stennis is also a little quicker than Henselt and can interrupt Henselt's sword swings with light attacks. Finally, if your Geralt build includes Riposte, Stennis can use that to great effect to rapidly whittle down Henselt's health at no risk to himself. Winning the duel is worth 200 XP.

If You Battle the Kaedweni Forces

It is possible to pick off the Kaedweni soldiers one by one while playing as Stennis, though this is quite dangerous due to his inability to dodge-roll. It's also quite slow, since most of Henselt's men are carrying heavy shields. You can end the battle much more quickly by standing at the edge of the mass melee and looking for a chance to go after Henselt directly. If you can defeat Henselt, you trigger a cutscene that ends the melee immediately. Getting through this phase of the quest is worth 200 XP.

Prince Stennis is the game's main reference to George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* fantasy cycle. He's named in homage to the character Stannis Baratheon.

When You're Not Geralt

Your brief stint fighting as Prince Stennis in this part of Chapter 2 is one of many sequences this chapter where you control someone who is not Geralt and therefore does not have his full range of abilities. These sequences should be manageable regardless of build on Normal and Easy but may be frustrating on higher difficulties if your Geralt build is specialized for alchemy or magic. Those abilities do not carry over when you control a character who is not Geralt, for the logical reason that whoever you're controlling isn't a witcher.

That said, it's worth noting that some abilities from the swordsmanship skill tree carry over when you control someone who isn't Geralt. Generally, you can't dodge-roll when you're controlling someone like Stennis, but passive abilities like Back Defense, Precision, and Violence are going to affect your performance in combat. Of the active abilities, the most notable one to carry over is Riposte. Keep this in mind if you start having serious problems completing a sequence where you aren't Geralt. Going into an earlier save and investing in the swordsmanship skill tree can make a big difference.

After some cutscenes, Geralt and his allies join up with Saskia and Stennis. Now you control Geralt and must help everyone battle a horde of Aedirnian knight wraiths. If you optimized your equipment last chapter, it really pays off here. You should be able to take out the wraiths rapidly with light attacks. Once you've defeated enough wraiths, two draugir appear. Draugir basically fight like knights with heavy shields, only their defense is even harder to get through.

Mage and alchemist Geralt builds need to stun or stagger a draugir to create an opening for doing damage. Mages want Aard or Yrden here, alchemists want Zerrikanian suns and Talgar winters. A swordsman build can try to sneak around to the draugir's back with dodge rolls, or try to simply tank through the draugir's attacks, using Quen to damage it while it's swinging its sword. Just like you, the draugir has to drop its guard before it attacks.

Note

Because of the way this sequence is structured, you won't have enough time to loot more than a handful of the kills you make in this sequence. Don't worry about it. None of these enemy drops are unique, and all can be obtained later in the chapter. If you really want to try picking up loot anyway, then quickly kill the first draugir and run away picking up loot while the NPCs keep the second occupied.

After you defeat the two draugir, you get some more cutscenes that make it clear the wraiths are never going to stop spawning. For the next sequence, you must stay within a cover of protective magic provided by a flying owl. It's very similar to the sequence last chapter where Triss protected you from arrows, but staying within the cover's field of protection is much easier. Occasionally Aedirnian knight wraiths may rush you, but by the time they get to you, they have so little vitality that a single light attack probably dispatches them.

There should be two or three sequences where wraiths appear and trap the owl. The field of cover stops moving and a draugir forms within it. You have a few options for how to handle these sequences. One way is to kill the draugir using whatever method works best for your Geralt build. You can take your time with this fight, since you have Iorveth to help you. You can also take time to loot the draugir's body before you start eliminating the wraiths. Try sheathing your sword if you're not getting the interaction prompt to loot the draugir's remains. Once the draugir is defeated, focus on attacking the wraiths. The wraiths respawn slowly over time, but you can take them out very quickly using light attacks. Once you clear out all the wraiths, the owl can move again. A second way to handle these situations is to simply ignore the draugir and go directly for the wraiths. Once you've defeated them all, the draugir begins taking damage from the owl's protective field and won't last long. The owl also eventually breaks free if you take too long slaying the draugir or wraiths.

Eventually, the owl leads you to Vergen, the dwarven city that serves as your home base for this chapter. You're near your goal once you see fog swirling ahead of you. At this point you can make a mad dash toward the fog to end the sequence more quickly, if you wish. Finishing this sequence is worth 550 XP and resolves this quest.

The War Council

This quest sets up a number of other main quests that take you through the plotline of this part of the game. Your first step is to follow Skalen Burdon into Geralt's room in Vergen's inn, the Cauldron. Vergen and its buildings make more use of vertical space than Flotsam did, which can make navigating a bit trickier. For now, just follow Skalen into the room, then immediately exit and head for the Castle of Three Fathers. Once inside, loot the inside areas. Be sure to pick up the dwarven enhancement in the foyer and all the random loot you can find in the two rooms to the left of the entrance to the main council chamber.

After you enter the main council chamber, cutscenes explain several of the quests you need to fulfill to finish this chapter. You need to break the curse filling the battlefield with wraiths and draugir, gather up all the components of a cure for Saskia, and then figure out some way to defeat Henselt's army. After the cutscenes outside Saskia's quarters end, head toward Vergen's Mahakam Gate. This triggers a cutscene that opens the gate, which lets you fully explore the city. You trigger an absolute ton of quests at this point, but ignore them for now and focus on getting your bearings.

When Philippa is explaining the ingredients she needs for Saskia's cure, see if you can get her to mention the "20 rings of power." This leads to one of the longest *Lord of the Rings* riffs in the game.

Vergen

Now is a good time to explore Vergen. Where Flotsam was usefully broken up into districts, Vergen's smaller and more vertical construction bunches everything of interest together a bit more. It can also make tracking quests using the in-game markers difficult, since markers may be pointing to locations above or below your current location. It's important to invest a little bit of time in learning where the major locations are and where you tend to find certain essential NPCs. While there are some districts, like the Outskirts and Rhundurin Square, most of the town is a haphazard collection of buildings. You can use certain buildings to act as shortcuts, going from a low level of the town up to a much higher one. Consult the map for this chapter to see where they're located and where they take you. These shortcut buildings are loaded with loot, while most of the houses in Vergen that aren't occupied by major NPCs are relatively bare. Still, be sure to check thoroughly around the city for chests. You can pick up a Dhu Bleidd and an Elaine Bleidd simply by picking over these chests.

Points of Interest

Mottle's Love Shack

Go pay a visit to Mottle in her little house just outside of town. If you're interested in starting the dialogue tree that leads to the romantic encounter, say "Tempt?" at the first branch. To take Mottle up on her offer, say "All right" at the next branch. If you say "That's not necessary," Mottle takes it well, but you don't get the encounter and she never offers it again.

If you do take Mottle up on her offer, then talk to her after the scene plays out. She gives you the key to the Tunnel of the Founders. It opens the door just off to the right of her. Pass through it to reach an inaccessible area just beyond that overlooks the Old Quarry. In this small area you can activate a circle of vigor and pick some herbs. Off to the right, you can head down a small path that takes you quickly down to the area just before the entrances to the Old Quarry and the Dwarven Catacombs.

This is a very useful shortcut in terms of saving time this chapter, so it's worth making Mottle happy for a night just to get access to it. Although you can't open the locked door nearby, take note of it. It leads into the secret tunnels beneath Vergen, which you'll visit later on.

The Old Gate

To get to the Old Gate, take the right-hand stairwell up above the Mahakam Gate, at the southwestern end of Rhundurin Square. The Old Gate leads to the Outskirts of Vergen, where the Scoia'tael have set up their headquarters. You can enter the headquarters to have interesting optional conversations with Iorveth at different points in the chapter, and to see what he looks like beneath that bandana of his. You can also have an interesting conversation with an elf named Gittan and listen to an elven storyteller spin tall tales about Saskia the Dragonslayer. You can get some good random loot out of the Scoia'tael headquarters and another building to the south. There are also a couple of weapons racks you can raid.

A tunnel at the north end of the Outskirts leads out into the wilderness. Finishing certain quests requires leaving Vergen through this tunnel rather than the main Mahakam Gate. If a quest description instructs you to leave through the Old Gate, it's referring to this tunnel.

Weapons Racks

Vergen is absolutely stuffed with useful loot, most of which we've tried to label on the maps if it's going to appear in every game. The weapons racks dotted throughout Vergen's outdoor areas are not exactly useful, but you can use them to obtain big piles of additional weapons that you can immediately turn around and sell. Each weapons rack you find in Vergen contains a dwarven hammer, a hammer, an elven messer, an elven sword, a small blackjack, a dwarven axe, an axe, and a hatchet. That's 38 pounds of loot you can sell for a quick 54 orens. Note that weapons racks you find indoors are going to behave more typically, offering a randomized selection of weapons as loot.

Felix Favela

This fellow sits in Rhundurin Square, usually near where Spark does business. If you opted to side with Iorveth before you fought Letho in Chapter 1, Felix remembers that you ran around saving nonhumans from the rioting humans. He insists on giving you an axe as thanks for your efforts.

The Town Guard

Just like Flotsam, Vergen has a town guard that gets pretty crotchety if you run around the areas near the Cauldron and Rhundurin Square with your sword drawn. As with the Flotsam town guard, it is perfectly possible to defeat them all. While you can't use NPCs to cheese the town guards as easily as you can in Flotsam, your upgraded equipment and skills should make killing the guards even easier, especially on lower difficulty levels. The guards here carry crossbows, though, so don't start killing guards without good cover available. Of course, as with the Flotsam town guard, it's really not worth your while in any way to actually do this. If you kill all the guards, then sometime later a cutscene occurs where a 400 oren fine is demanded from you. If you refuse to pay, then you die automatically in a cutscene.

As you travel around Vergen, you occasionally pass dwarves merrily singing "Heigh-Ho!" Yes, that's a reference to the "Heigh-Ho" sung by the dwarfs in Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

Merchants

Innkeeper

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

You never learn the name of the friendly dwarf who runs the Cauldron, but you should rapidly learn that he sells garbage. He's mostly useful as someone who's willing to buy up stuff that's not worth keeping or storing. You can also talk to the innkeeper to access the Cauldron's storage and need to talk to him to progress a few quests.

Mysterious Merchant

Item	Price	Item	Price
Diagram: Solid Cloth	176	Armor of Ban Ard	1582
Diagram: Hardened Leather	176	Robust Blue Meteorite Sword	935
Diagram: Studded Leather	194	Robust Yellow Meteorite Sword	694
Diagram: Elemental Stone	150	Poisoned Zerrikanian Saberra	617
Diagram: Oil	89	Sun Rune	264
Diagram: Leather	124	Ysgith Rune	351
Diagram: Essence of Water	159	Earth Rune	176
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	185	Moon Rune	264
Diagram: Diamond Dust	220	Fire Rune	351

The Mysterious Merchant in Vergen lingers just to the right of the stairwell that leads down to the Cauldron's entrance. His shop list is mostly similar to what it was in Chapter 1, so you can pick up discounted diagrams you might want from him. The main thing about his shop list that's different is the armor and weapon selection, which is more suited to the power level of enemies you face in this chapter. None of it is really worth investing in, though.

Haggard

Craftsman

Item	Price	Item	Price
Temerian Sword	376	Silver Ore	45
Necrophage Blood	64	Aedirnian Short Sword	537
Nekker Teeth	64	Aedirnian Light Sword	534
Nekker Claws	32	Aedirnian Red Sword	596
Blue Meteorite Ore	26	Diagram: Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	164
Endrega Hide	89	Diagram: Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	339
Harpy Claws	64	Diagram: Red Meteorite Silver Sword	151
Essence of Water	14	Diagram: Robust Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	264
Diamond Dust	29	Diagram: Robust Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	626
Red Meteorite Ore	26	Diagram: Robust Red Meteorite Silver Sword	226
Amethyst Dust	22	Diagram: Sun Rune	439
Rusty Well-Balanced Dagger	26	Diagram: Ysgith Rune	439
Well-Balanced Dagger	39	Diagram: Earth Rune	439
Robust Well-Balanced Dagger	51	Diagram: Moon Rune	439
Superb Well-Balanced Dagger	76	Diagram: Fire Rune	564
Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	51	Sun Rune	376
Robust Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	76	Ysgith Rune	501
Superb Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	101	Earth Rune	251
Harpy Trap	126	Moon Rune	376
Diagram: Harpy Trap	201	Fire Rune	501
Iron Ore	20		

One of this chapter's three craftsmen, as well as a merchant and dice player, Haggard sells the diagrams for the robust blue, red, and yellow meteorite swords. Depending on your Geralt build (see the sidebar "Meteorite Swords"), one of these three swords is going to be the best silver sword you can equip him with in the chapter. Buy the right diagram and manufacture the sword as early in the chapter as you can, so you can take advantage of it in the many monster-slaying quests you have to finish here. Haggard also sells diagrams for all of the game's runes, which really opens up the game in terms of how you can take advantage of socketing your swords. Note that all of this chapter's best steel swords are going to be looted rather than crafted, but really need to be fully socketed with runes to get the most out of them.

Meteorite Swords

This chapter introduces the red, blue, and yellow meteorite sword lines. These swords come in normal and robust versions in this chapter, with superb variations becoming available in Chapter 3. These swords tend to be very similar in terms of damage potential, but each color offers a distinct type of bonus. Red swords always offer a bonus to instant kill chance, blue swords always offer a damage bonus on signs, and yellow swords always offer a bonus to adrenaline generation. Which type of sword is best for you, especially in this chapter, depends on both your Geralt build and your play style.

Generally speaking, red meteorite swords are best for alchemist builds that have taken (or plan to take) the Berserker skill and swordsmanship builds that have taken (or plan to take) the Sudden Death skill. Blue meteorite swords are ideal for mage builds or any build that has invested in amping up the effectiveness of a particular sign (like Aard or Quen). Yellow meteorite swords are in theory useful to any build that gets an adrenaline ability, but in practical terms give more benefit to mages and swordsmen than they do to alchemists, who can generate lots of adrenaline passively just by having high toxicity.

It is possible to get into Chapter 2 with a Geralt build that is not yet specialized. Since the robust meteorite swords are the best silver swords for this chapter, you should take a few moments to make a plan for Geralt's development before you invest in one of them. You don't want to buy a robust red meteorite sword and then discover the hard way that your build just isn't very good at scoring instant kills.

EarSO

Craftsman

Item	Price	Item	Price
Harpy Trap	126	Phosphorescent Crystal	20
Conflagration	76	Thumper	14
Talgar Winter	76	Leather	20
Clawer	51	Timber	7
Biter	51	Endrega Hide	89
Diagram: Harpy Trap	201	Twine	14
Diagram: Conflagration	251	Grapeshot	101
Diagram: Clawer	189	Formula: Dancing Star	84
Diagram: Talgar Winter	276	Formula: Dragon's Dream	111
Diagram: Rage	251	Formula: Devil's Puffball	77
Diagram: Biter	226	Formula: Flare	35
Diagram: Well-Balanced Dagger	89	Formula: Stenchbulb	63
Diagram: Blue Meteorite Ore	301	Formula: Zerrikanian Sun	97
Rotten Meat	7	Formula: Grapeshot	70
Bauble	14	Formula: Red Haze	84
Endrega Gland Extract	14		

Earso fills a role similar to Cedric's in Chapter 1, selling diagrams for all types of traps and various lures. Basically, anything you decide you want that you didn't pick up from Cedric last chapter, you can pick up from Earso now. Earso is also a craftsman.

Felicia Cori

Barber

Item	Price	Item	Price
Formula: Rook	173	The Rudiments of Pathomorphology	1
Formula: Golden Oriole	63	The Immortelle or the Dwarven Herb	1
Petri's Philter	26	Lure of the Temptress	91
Formula: Falka's Blood	139	The Horrors of War: Rotfiends	64
Formula: Brown Oil	125	Harpies—Daughters of the Gale	91
Formula: Cat	70	The Arachas—A Study	145
Formula: Samum	104	Drowners: A Textbook for Initiates of the Order of the Flaming Rose	32
Formula: Swallow	70	Nekkers in the Mist	32
Formula: Gadwall	139	Three Years Among the Endregas	64
Formula: Thunderbolt	125	Wraiths: Fear and Trembling	91
Formula: White Raffard's Decoction	97	Bruxae – Eulogists of Death	101
Formula: Hanged Man's Venom	90	How to Kill a Bullvore	126
Formula: Arachnid Oil	104	Beings of the Element of Earth	189
Formula: Lapwing	139	Of Trolls and Trolling	157
Formula: Tiara	84	Formula: Tawny Owl	207
Formula: Wolf	77	Formula: Specter Oil	104
Formula: Whirl	207	Formula: Necrophage Oil	125
Formula: Brock	104	Formula: Blade Oil	70
Formula: Virga	104	Slaves of the Curse	157
Formula: Stammelford's Philtre	207	The Legendary Accursed	189
Formula: Maribor Forest	152	Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters—Maintenance and Repair	126
Diagram: Solid Cloth	251	The Temerian Royal Dynasty	64
Diagram: Hardened Leather	251	Magic and Power	64
Diagram: Studded Leather	276	The Feudal Society and Its Enemies	64
Diagram: Elemental Stone	214	The Vizimar Uprising	64
Diagram: Oil	126	The Grand Triple	64
Diagram: Leather	176	Monstrum, or a Portrayal of Witchers	64
Diagram: Essence of Water	226	The Realms of the Nordlings	64
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264	The Valley of the Flowers	64
Diagram: Diamond Dust	314	The Dun Banner	64
Balisse	11	Essence of Water	14
White Myrtle Petals	12	Diamond Dust	29
Celandine	10	Amethyst Dust	22
Wolfsbane	15	Cloth	20
Scleroderm	14	Leather	20
Cortinarius	16	Oil	14
Bryonia	24	Essence of Death	189
Mandrake Root	20	Arachas Eyes	439
Verbena	24	Troll Tongue	439
Surgical Tools	164		

Felicia sells a positively staggering array of items, including several that are quest-related. She is the only bookseller you encounter in this version of Chapter 2, as well as the only seller of potion formulas. Now's your chance to pick up any potions or books you missed in Chapter 1, as well as some new books that describe monsters and other things you encounter in Chapter 2. Note that Felicia's selection of books is quasi-random, much like Einar's, so she may not sell a specific item on her possible shop list in your version of the game. Sometimes you can reset her shop list by meditating for a while between visits to her. You can also visit Felicia to change Geralt's hairstyle if you like. This works the same way it did with Einar in Chapter 1.

Mael

Craftsman

Item	Price	Item	Price
Studded Leather Reinforcement	64	Long Leather Gauntlets	187
Diagram: Amethyst Armor Reinforcements	201	Robust Leather Trousers	137
Diagram: Endrega Hide Armor Reinforcements	201	Heavy Leather Trousers	153
Diagram: Draug Armor	1626	Iron Ore	20
Quilted Leather	282	Silver Ore	45
Leather Jacket	206	Diagram: Long Leather Gauntlets	76
Studded Leather Jacket	285	Diagram: Hardened Leather Boots	101
Heavy Leather Jacket	394	Diagram: Studded Leather Trousers	76
Fibre Enhancer	33	Diagram: Heavy Leather Trousers	126
Mail Enhancement	158	Diagram: Diamond Armor Reinforcements	276
Armor Enhancement	32	Quilted Armor	781
Leather Enhancement	33	Dragon Scale Armor	3617
Hardened Leather Boots	305	Reinforced Leather Enhancement	34
Short Gauntlets	137	Aedirnian Leather Jacket	1022

Mael is the third of the chapter's three craftsmen and otherwise is a merchant who specializes in armor. He sells several types of armor that are much better than what you're wearing now, including the diagram for the draug armor. If you've pored over the item listings in the appendix, you've probably noticed that the draug armor is by far the strongest armor you can get in Chapter 2. The catch to this is that you cannot actually manufacture the draug armor in Chapter 2. The actions that allow you to obtain the armor's final component also trigger a quest that automatically shuts down all merchants in Vergen for the rest of the Chapter.

It's really Chapter 3 before you can use the draug armor. If you think that's the armor set you want to use for Chapter 3 and the end of the game, make sure you buy the diagram from Mael before you resolve **The Eternal Battle**. The draug armor is actually the second-strongest set of armor in a standard (that is, non-Dark Mode) game, though. If you want to go for the strongest set, the vran armor that becomes available later on in Chapter 3, then you may want to skip the draug armor entirely and save your money.

The best armor you can obtain before the Vergen merchants close down is the armor of Loc Muinne, which you can loot after you defeat a specific enemy who appears as part of the game's storyline. The second-best is the dragon scale armor you can purchase from Mael. If you want to hold on to your cash, it's completely possible to make it to the end of the chapter using the kayran armor or hunter's armor, provided you've fully socketed it with good enhancements.

Spark

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Spark is basically a "trash merchant." She doesn't sell anything you want. Her main use is in selling off loot that's put you over the encumbrance limit when you're adventuring beyond the Mahakam Gate. She is the merchant who stands farthest out from the city if Mottle isn't in your game. If Mottle is in your game, of course, then Spark serves no purpose at all and you can safely ignore her.

Thorak

Item	Price	Item	Price
Blue Meteorite Ore	26	Fire Rune	501
Red Meteorite Ore	26	Diagram: Robust Red Meteorite Silver Sword	226
Yellow Meteorite Ore	26	Diagram: Robust Yellow Meteorite Sword	264
Diagram: Sun Rune	439	Diagram: Robust Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	626
Diagram: Ysgith Rune	439	Harpy Trap	126
Diagram: Earth Rune	439	Diagram: Harpy Trap	201
Diagram: Moon Rune	439	Iron Ore	20
Diagram: Fire Rune	564	Silver Ore	45
Sun Rune	376	Aedirnian Short Sword	537
Ysgith Rune	501	Aedirnian Light Sword	534
Earth Rune	251	Aedirnian Red Sword	596
Moon Rune	376		

Thorak isn't marked in-game as a merchant, but if you talk to him he offers to trade. His shop list is very similar to Haggard's, but Thorak is noteworthy in that he sells all three types of meteorite ore. It is possible to get Thorak to discount his goods for you, which makes him a bit more useful. It is also possible to remove Thorak from the game completely, depending on what you do during a certain quest.

Bouward

Item	Price	Item	Price
Rusty Well-Balanced Dagger	26	Diagram: Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	339
Well-Balanced Dagger	39	Diagram: Red Meteorite Silver Sword	151
Robust Well-Balanced Dagger	51	Diagram: Robust Yellow Meteorite Sword	264
Superb Well-Balanced Dagger	76	Diagram: Robust Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	626
Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	51	Diagram: Robust Red Meteorite Silver Sword	226
Robust Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	76	Diagram: Sun Rune	439
Superb Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	101	Diagram: Ysgith Rune	439
Harpy Trap	126	Diagram: Earth Rune	439
Diagram: Harpy Trap	201	Diagram: Moon Rune	438
Iron Ore	20	Diagram: Fire Rune	564
Silver Ore	45	Sun Rune	376
Aedirnian Short Sword	537	Ysgith Rune	501
Aedirnian Light Sword	534	Earth Rune	251
Aedirnian Red Sword	596	Moon Rune	376
Diagram: Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	164	Fire Rune	501

If Thorak is removed from your game, Bouward appears to conduct business in his place. His shop list is overall much better than Thorak's, though you can't get him to discount goods for you. It is particularly useful to get Bouward to appear if you really like using throwing daggers in combat, since otherwise you can only buy them in this chapter from Haggard.

Mottle

Item	Price	Item	Price
Balisse	11	Mandrake Root	20
White Myrtle Petals	12	Verbena	24
Celandine	10	Diamond Dust	29
Wolfsbane	15	Amethyst Dust	22
Scleroderm	14	Cloth	20
Cortinarius	16	Leather	20
Bryonia	24		

Take a left as you're exiting Vergen through the Mahakam Gate to find Mottle's shop area tucked away around a bend. Mottle is only going to be there to buy and sell things if you saved her from the burning building at the end of Chapter 1. If you instead opted to kill Loredo, Mottle just won't be there at all. Mottle doesn't sell anything especially interesting, but she can be useful if you need to quickly sell off heavy loot after an adventure out in the wilderness. You can get to her more quickly than you can any of the merchants who operate in Rhundurin Square. You can also have a romantic encounter with her, which lets you obtain the useful key to the Tunnel of the Founders.

Subterranean Life

Hey, Work's on in the Mines!

Something that makes Chapter 2 of this game very different from Chapter 1 is how the side quests work. Most of Chapter 1's side quests are freestanding affairs you can do without affecting the main plot at all. In Chapter 2, especially on this route, most of the side quests are best done while you're completing a main quest, since the side quests tend to affect the same areas. This particular quest you want to do first thing after you get settled in Vergen, since you can't really complete the mini-game quests here until it's resolved.

First, go to the notice board just to the right of the Cauldron's entrance. Take the "Proclamation of the Closure of the Mines." Next, make sure you have some grapeshot bombs on hand, ideally at least three. If you don't, go make some. Next, enter the Cauldron and talk to the innkeeper. Drop off everything you're carrying with a substantial weight that you don't expect to use in the mines. That especially includes heavy crafting materials, ranged weapons you don't expect to use, even heavy alchemy reagents you don't expect to use. You're about to enter a dungeon-like area loaded with heavy loot, so lightening your load cuts down on trips you have to make to the surface to drop things off in storage. Finally, head into the Cauldron and approach Zoltan's table. Yarpen, Sheldon, and Cecil are all gathered with him. Speak with Zoltan to trigger a cutscene.

During the cutscene, you have chances to ask questions related to other quests, which you should be sure to do. Eventually, Geralt brings up the immortelle, and Sheldon talks about where you might find it. Eventually, all the dwarves agree that it's probably growing in the old abandoned mine, and wouldn't it be cool to go in there axes swinging and kill all the monsters? So after the cutscenes, the whole group of dwarves leads Geralt to the abandoned mine. Cecil authorizes them to open up the mine, and Zoltan, Yarpen, and Sheldon head in along with you. The three of them are very useful during this dungeon crawl, since they do a good job of keeping the larger groups of enemies from dogpiling you.

The enemies you're about to face are necrophages: rotfiends, greater rotfiends, and a bullvore. If you're carrying optimized equipment from Chapter 1, you should have no difficulties whatsoever defeating these enemies. Alchemist builds can get great mileage out of necrophage oil in this dungeon, while mages and swordsmen may want to save an application of it for the bullvore at the end. Rotfiends are flammable and emit flammable gases when they explode at death, so Igni and dancing stars can be highly effective in battle against them. The bullvore attacks with powerful poison, so be sure you're carrying the right reagents to brew a Mongoose before you fight it. Geralts built around swordsmanship can just focus on hacking through the monsters with brute force. Investing a talent or two in Whirl's group damage abilities can give Geralt a major edge.

Toxic Blood

If you want to pick up the Toxic Blood character attribute, now is a good time to do it. Even with resistances, you tend to get poisoned when a greater rotfiend explodes on you. If you get poisoned 15 times, you can pick up Toxic Blood and get a +30 percent chance to poison enemies when Geralt's toxicity is high from potion use. Alchemists can get a lot of mileage out of this attribute, especially when fighting humanoids. It's generally best to try and get a rotfiend to explode on you if you've whittled the group's numbers down, or if you've lured one away from a group the dwarves are keeping busy. If you just stand in the middle of explosions while surrounded, the damage can pile up a bit more quickly than you can handle. It's a good idea to cast Quen quickly after being poisoned, instead of soaking up all the poison damage each time it's inflicted.

The mine's interior is very dark, so put some thought into how you explore it. There are two main options. One is to simply stick with the dwarves and scan repeatedly with your medallion as you inch forward. Alternatively, you can drink a Cat potion, which makes it a lot easier to keep track of enemy locations and clues like bloodstains on the ground. If you opt for the Cat method, you probably want to apply some sort of oil to your sword to compensate for the -10% damage penalty. For an alchemist build with Catalysis, the penalty is going to be negligible.

Loot the first body you find for a stash of poisoned harpy claws, which you want to hold onto for later in the chapter. When you pass through the door into the first big central section of the mine, about four rotfiends attack you. Make quick work of them with light attacks and any other tricks you want, and then a cutscene triggers. After the cutscene, begin exploring the chamber, which should be full of random loot. Use Igni on the fire pots to light them by standing nearby and pressing the interaction button. Once you light a fire pot it keeps burning and should help you keep track of where you've explored.

After you've cleaned out the central chamber, start exploring the passage just to the right of the entrance. You should find a couple of rotfiends there, along with some superb heavy leather trousers in a chest at the end of the dead-end passage. Loot the body you find there to pick up the upper shaft key, Balin's journal (I), and Balin's first map. Just beyond the body, a small tunnel leads away from the passage's end. This is one of the locations you need to visit to complete **Hey, Work's On in the Mines!** Although the quest text calls for beehive bombs, this is really just an oblique reference to grapeshot. If you're carrying grapeshot, press the interaction button to collapse the tunnel. To clear **Hey, Work's on in the Mines!**, you need to collapse two more tunnels like this. Be sure to roll away before the blast goes off.

Now that you have the upper shaft key, head into the tunnel to the left of the entrance tunnel. Once inside, fight your way through the rotfiends. There's plenty of random loot to be had. Head toward the door at the end of this tunnel to get some more random loot and explore a passage that the miners collapsed. Head back toward the entrance. Just before the door that leads back into it, you should find another tunnel you can collapse. Scan with your medallion to highlight it if you're having a hard time spotting it. This opens up a new mine passage, full of more random loot and rotfiends.

Don't be surprised if you have to make trips back into Vergen to drop off loot into storage, even if you really lightened your load before entering. You can cut back on this by just dropping the iron ore you find in the mines, as it's going to be far more than you'll ever use in completing the game and its resale value is quite poor. Make sure you keep all of the silver ore and any colored meteorite ores you find in the mines, as these substances are rare, useful, and valuable.

In time, you come to a locked door that requires a key you don't have yet. Explore the passage that leads off to the left of the door instead. At the very end of this passage is the second of the three tunnels you must collapse. There's also a body nearby. Loot it to receive the middle passage key, Balin's second map, and Balin's journal (II). Head back to the last locked door you stumbled across. Now you can pass through.

The middle shaft emerges into another major cave, this one actually open to the air and light a little. You still need to clear a pack of rotfiends out of it when you first enter, of course. Light the fire pots nearby and pass through the unlocked door directly ahead of you. This leads to a more recessed cavern stuffed with treasure. Loot the room, then loot the body at the center of it to get the lower shaft key, Balin's third map, and Balin's journal (III).

Head back to the open-air chamber and this time go down the broad wooden ramp that leads off to your left. When this tunnel forks, take the right-hand path. You reach a narrow tunnel lined with fire pots and snares. It can be useful to use your medallion to highlight the snares' locations, as they're rather hard to spot in the mine's darkness. Disarm the snares one by one and gather them up. At the end of the tunnel is a small room, the entrance strewn with snares. Pick up the snares, then loot the body at the center of the room. This gives you the storehouse key and Balin's journal (IV). The storehouse key lets you get into an optional area with really good loot, but it's best to visit it on the way out rather than backtrack right now.

Doing stuff with the storehouse key is optional, but there's no harm in doing it now. Head back up to the chamber just ahead of the main entrance and explore the middle set of tunnels. At the end of the left fork you should find the diagram of the red meteorite silver sword. At the end of the right fork you find a room thick with random loot and the door the storehouse key opens. Inside there's a bunch of bags of random loot and a chest containing the robust sword of Dol Blathanna, some grapeshot, and some orens. Go ahead and equip the robust sword of Dol Blathanna, as it's probably better than whatever you're carrying now. You can use this steel sword comfortably until you obtain the chapter's best steel sword in a later quest.

Now, go back to the open-air chamber and take the tunnel off to your right again. This time when the tunnel forks, go down the left tunnel. Use the lower shaft key to pass through the door. This finally lets you into the tunnel that leads to the bullvore. When you draw near and your dwarven allies begin commenting on the stench, stop and prepare any potions you're going to drink. Your medallion also warns you of danger around the same time. Mongoose is very useful here, since it makes you immune to the bullvore's strong poison attack. Treat your sword with necrophage oil, then wade into battle. Because of the bullvore's large size, the dwarven NPCs tend to pin it in place, so it's fairly easy for you to just hack at it with strong blows until it dies. Just be careful of its escort of rotfiends, which can be a little dangerous in such an enclosed space.

Loot the bullvore's body and equip the bullvore trophy if you happen to obtain it as a drop. The bullvore brain you get here is useful in a later quest, so make sure you don't sell it or use it up in alchemy. Then loot all the immortelles and bodies nearby. Once you've picked an immortelle, **Subterranean Life** resolves and you get 1,000 XP. Collapse the tunnel at the very rear of the bullvore's area to finish **Hey, Work's on in the Mines!** Completing this quest counts toward the Pest Control achievement.

Since you're headed out anyway, now is a good time to visit the area you can access with the storehouse key. When you get to the chamber that's just ahead of the main entrance, explore the middle set of tunnels you haven't visited yet. At the end of the left fork you should find the diagram of the red meteorite silver sword. At the end of the right fork you find a room thick with random loot and the door the storehouse key opens. Inside there's a bunch of bags of random loot and a chest containing the robust sword of Dol Blathanna, some grapeshot, and some orens. Go ahead and equip the robust sword of Dol Blathanna, as it's probably better than whatever you're carrying now. You can use this steel sword comfortably until you obtain the chapter's best steel sword in a later quest.

After you leave the mines, you trigger a cutscene. After that's over, go find Cecil Burdon so you can get your reward money for finishing **Hey, Work's on in the Mines!** Say "The necrophage nest" to get your payment. Your reward is 50 orens and the diagram of the hardened leather boots.

This is another of this game's *Lord of the Rings* references, though it's more homage than parody. It references the "Mines of Moria" sequence from the first book in the trilogy, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, where the Fellowship discovers that a balrog has taken over the dwarven mine at Moria and slaughtered the inhabitants. The bullvore plays the role of the balrog here, while the Balin of the various Balin's journals plays the role of, well, Balin. One of the journals even includes the famous line "Fly, you fools!"—Gandalf's last words before battling the balrog.

Side Quest: Poker Face: Vergen

Begin by going to Haggard's house. There you can find Bruno Biggs and Cornelius Meyer, the first two dice poker opponents you need to beat in this quest line. Speak to one of them to initiate the quest. After you've beaten the two of them, head over to the Cauldron and challenge the innkeeper. After he's beaten, head back to Cecil Burdon's and challenge him. Once you beat him, go challenge Haggard. You can take the orens you would've won from beating Haggard, or you can ask him for something more valuable by saying "I don't want gold." Haggard offers you a choice of the diagrams for blue, red, and yellow meteorite ore.

It is generally best to take the diagram that corresponds to the color of meteorite sword you've settled on as best for your Geralt build. Otherwise, you don't make heavy use of meteorite ore later on in the game. Dark Mode players should always take the blue meteorite ore diagram. Be sure to ask about the meteorite ore when you have the chance in dialogue, as it leads to some interesting conversation concerning the mysterious ores you begin learning about in Chapter 3.

Side Quest: One on One: Vergen

Now it's time to go punch people in the face. Head into the Cauldron and speak to one of the men gathered around the fistfighting ring. Say "Yeah, I'll fight" to start competing. You can wager up to 20 orens on the first bout with Young Zis, up to 50 orens in your second bout with Stel Placeholdern, and up to 60 orens in your third bout with Percy Borsuk. Beating all three of these opponents at a maximum bet is worth 260 orens. You can opt to refight these opponents later, which makes this the best way to grind orens in this chapter.

After you defeat Boruk, Silgrat shows up and insists on challenging Geralt for the championship. You can turn Silgrat down if you like, but challenging him opens up a new side quest.

Side Quest: A Score to Settle

If you defeat Silgrat, he begs you to kill him because you've ruined his reputation. Geralt reasonably refuses, and Silgrat swears revenge. You win 100 orens, and...well, that's all that happens for now, but you'll see Silgrat later on in Chapter 3.

Side Quest: Bring It On: Vergen

Arm-wrestling is tough in this chapter, but you can get some extraordinarily good rewards. That said, though, you can't arm-wrestle for orens in this chapter, so if you want to grind orens, you need to stick to fistfighting. Anyway, begin by speaking with either Yarpen or Sheldon at Zoltan's table. Challenge him to arm-wrestle you. You get 25 XP for beating Yarpen, who is a little more difficult than Sheldon. Now, go find Skalen Burdon, who is probably also in the Cauldron. Challenge him to an arm-wrestling match. Note that he is a more challenging opponent than anyone you've faced so far, so you may have to match him a few times to get a win. Beating Skalen is worth 50 XP.

Once you do get a win, go back and speak with Yarpen and Sheldon. Pick the dialogue option that means beating Skalen. Yarpen gives you a fire rune and Sheldon gives you an earth rune. These rewards are completely worth the effort of beating Skalen once.

Death Symbolized

With Flickering Heart

Doing these two quests simultaneously might seem strange, but it makes sense based on the locations you need to visit to resolve the quests. First, go speak to Ele'yas outside the Cauldron any time after **The War Council** is resolved, but don't begin pursuing **With Flickering Heart** until you're also ready to resolve **Death Symbolized**.

If you've been following this guide exactly, Geralt is probably located in the inn as you read this. So, begin by speaking to Yarpen Zigren. Ask Yarpen "Do you remember Brenna?" and you'll get a lot of information about the Battle of Brenna, which is tied into the curse afflicting the battlefield.

Next, go outside and speak to Ele'yas, who stands right next to the Cauldron's entrance. He says that some sort of monster is luring young men out to be murdered. He offers Geralt a bounty if he can slay the monster and stop the disappearances. Simple enough. Ask him some additional questions about what's happening to gather extra information.

Go pay a visit to Felicia Cori. You want to purchase the surgical tools. It can also be helpful to purchase the book *The Rudiments of Pathomorphology*, if it happens to be in her inventory at the time, though only the surgical tools are strictly necessary for advancing **With Flickering Heart**. It can also be helpful to buy and read the book *The Dun Banner*, which she also sells.

Now you're ready to leave town. Head out the Mahakam Gate. Follow the path and you eventually come to the remnants of a village that burned to the ground. Look around for bloodstains. Once you find them, Geralt speaks a line of dialogue that advances **With Flickering Heart**. Scan around the area to find a couple of circles and a corpse wearing Temerian jackboots and heavy leather trousers you can loot. If you're traveling through this area at night, be ready to fight wraiths.

Head back to town, and this time exit through the Old Gate. Once you're out of the tunnel and into the wilderness, you run afoul of some Scoia'tael turned bounty hunters at the creek north of town. Defeating them shouldn't be difficult. Loot their bodies for some odds and ends, as well as another copy of the arrest warrant. If you're in this area at night, or near the other bodies of water you cross along the way, you may encounter drowners.

After you cross the creek, you're very likely to run into a pack of four or so harpies prowling the area. This encounter respawns, so you can end up fighting them about once a day. Another encounter you can run into in several different places on the north side of the creek is a troop of three Kaedweni soldiers who attack you on sight. If you can get the Kaedwenis to attack while other monsters are in the area, they try to fight the monsters instead and it becomes quite easy for you to pick everyone off. The Kaedwenis are notable because one of them drops the Kaedweni black sword, a unique steel sword that's worth using if you didn't get the robust sword of Dol Blathanna earlier (or happen to like the black sword's critical effects better).

A bit farther on the way toward the catacombs, you usually run afoul of a group of nekkers that spawn near a small pond. Large numbers spawn at once, so they can be a threat if you're not prepared for them. It's fun to lead the Kaedwenis into a nekker ambush if they attack you around this area, though. Search the area around the pond very carefully to find a corpse carrying random loot. Once you find this, you aren't far from the entrance to the Dwarven Catacombs.

Once you're inside the catacombs, move forward. An obvious false wall is in front of you, so blast it over with Aard. This opens up a crypt. Be ready to be attacked by a group of wraiths when you step inside. Just as during In the Claws of Madness, the close quarters make the wraiths more dangerous than they would be normally. Alchemist builds shouldn't hesitate to use traps and bombs to get the group under control, while mages can make good use of Axii. Quen is essential for swordsman builds here—it's very difficult to get through these battles without getting surrounded.

You can examine the corpses in the crypt by approaching them and pressing the interaction button to uncover them. Doing this sometimes summons a wraith. Many corpses yield nothing interesting when examined, but a few reveal some random loot, orens, or rather significant items. One of the bodies in this crypt, for instance, yields the unique silver sword Fate when examined. Equip it if you're not already using something better.

Continue exploring the catacombs. The next two false walls you can blast away reveal nothing useful, but the third one should open up another large crypt chamber. Be sure to pick up the Wild Hunt investigator's notes just before you come to the chamber where the fresh corpse awaits. When you come to the fresh corpse, pick the various options that appear in the dialogue tree to gain information about it. Be sure to examine the arms so you can use the surgical tools to extract the metal fragment. The metal fragment is not a quest item and does not appear in your inventory. If you examine the arms with the surgical tools in your possession, Geralt remarks upon the metal fragment. Once you've heard that bit of dialogue, then you've successfully retrieved it. Also make sure to examine the torso, then turn the body over so you can find Dandelion's poetry sketchbook. Examining the body lets you obtain the Anatomy Lesson character attribute, which becomes very useful at the end of the chapter.

You're done with **With Flickering Heart** in the catacombs, but stay around a bit longer to resolve **Death Symbolized**. Continue exploring and open up the final crypt in the catacombs by blasting down the false wall. This reveals the ghost of Ekhart Hennessy, color bearer of the Dun Banner. In death, he's become the guardian of the Dun Banner itself, so Geralt can't obtain it unless he deals with the ghost somehow. There are two different ways you can do this.

The most direct and easy way is to slay Ekhart Hennessy's wraith. He is an incredibly weak opponent that swordsman builds can dispatch with little more than a chain of strong attacks. Alchemist and mage builds may opt to play around a little with potion buffs or signs, but they shouldn't have any difficulty defeating him. After Hennessy is slain, you can simply loot the Dun Banner itself, called the standard, from Hennessy's sarcophagus.

There's also a sneaky but slightly more challenging way to resolve the quest. You can attempt to convince Hennessy that you're a surviving member of the Dun Banner who needs the corps' standard for a worthy cause. If you can do this successfully, Hennessy gives you the standard and an extra item, the sword of the Dun Banner, willingly. To deceive Hennessy, you must answer all of his questions about the Battle of Brenna correctly. If you remember the details of your conversation with Yarpen and have read *The Dun Banner*, this is not difficult.

In case your memory fails you, the answers Hennessy wants at each branch of the conversation with him on this route are listed here. Note that you can do a version of this quest on Roche's route, and on that route one of the answers is slightly different.

Answer List

I served in the Banner.

You got it wrong.

Menno Coehoorn.

Coehoorn is dead.

Vandergrift and Seltkirk.

Biggerhorn took me prisoner.

Note that if you answer one of Hennessy's questions incorrectly, he sees through your deception and attacks you—unless you're carrying a certain item (see "The Beaver Cap" sidebar). He also attacks you if you give him a violent response like "Die!" It's still possible to complete the quest by killing him if he attacks you, it just won't be possible to get the sword of the Dun Banner. The sword of the Dun Banner is decent but not the best steel sword for this chapter, so it's no huge loss if you can't get it. Regardless of how you resolve **Death Symbolized**, there are no XP rewards involved.

Here's another *Lord of the Rings* reference. Hennessy's wraith refers to the sword of the Dun Banner as the "sword of Colonel Gondor." In the mythology of *LotR*, Gondor was the greatest kingdom of men at the end of the Third Age.

The Beaver Cap

If you answer one of Hennessy's questions incorrectly, he attacks you—unless you're carrying the beaver cap, an item you can obtain by completing the quest **Baltimore's Nightmare**. All of the members of the Dun Banner wore beaver caps, so if you have one in your inventory the wraith concludes you must be the genuine article. To complete **Baltimore's Nightmare**, make sure you do particular things while completing this chapter's very long harpy-related quest line. This walkthrough recommends waiting to do the harpy quests as late in the chapter as possible, for reasons that should become clearer as you read on.

If you really want the beaver cap before doing **Death Symbolized**, then you should put off finishing these quests until after you've completed the harpy quest line. Just don't complete the harpy quest line out of sequence, whatever you do. You really need to not do it until you've finished **Where Is Triss Merigold?** and begun **Royal Blood**.

Loot the other bodies in Hennessy's room of the catacombs, then head back to town. You should be entirely done with this location now, with no need to return to it. For the rest of this sequence, you'll be resolving **With Flickering Heart**. First, go find Dandelion at the Cauldron and show him the poetry sketchbook by saying "I found some of your scribblings." Eventually, you cajole Dandelion into meeting you at the burned village after midnight. Head out through the Mahakam Gate and, if necessary, meditate until the right time.

When you walk toward Dandelion, you trigger a cutscene that is then followed by the player taking control of Dandelion for a while. To successfully lure out the Succubus, you need to correctly sing the third set of lyrics Dandelion wrote in his poetry sketchbook, which you should read before starting this part of the quest. Each of these decisions is timed, too, so you must make the correct decision quickly. The correct responses to make at each of the timed decision points are written here, to help jog your memory.

Correct Lyrics

If our bodies...

My heart would inquire...

Or treat it as a morsel...

There is no penalty for singing the lyrics incorrectly, it just means that you failed to lure out the Succubus and have to try again. Once the Succubus responds to Dandelion in a cutscene, you have to make a decision as Dandelion. You can have him enter the Succubus's lair alone or have him report back to Geralt once the way is open.

If you choose to send Dandelion into the Succubus's lair, Geralt immediately curses Dandelion's foolishness and goes in after him. Speak to the Succubus once you're in her lair. At any branch in the dialogue, you can initiate a battle with her by saying "You're lying, I won't let you murder anyone else."

The Succubus is not a strong combatant and most Geralt builds at this point in the game should have no trouble overwhelming her, though she does have a lot of vitality. She fights like a mage, so throwing daggers come in handy here to interrupt her spells. Once you defeat her, she drops the Succubus' wand, an additional weapon that you otherwise can't obtain, and some random loot that can be quite valuable. If you've killed the Succubus, then you need to go see Ele'yas back in town to complete the quest. He gives you the steel sword Angivare, which is otherwise unobtainable, and 100 orens. You also get 200 XP.

If you say "Like the others?" then the Succubus attempts to justify her actions. Say "Who's the murderer?" to find out that the Succubus isn't killing anyone, but rather one of her mad lovers is doing it instead. If you ask after the murderer's identity, the Succubus claims it's Ele'yas. At the final branch of the conversation, you can say "Why should I help you?" and the Succubus explains that she doesn't want people to think she's a murderer and also offers a reward. At this point, you can say "I'll talk to Ele'yas" if you want to help the Succubus instead of killing her.

If you have Dandelion send Geralt in alone, then the entire conversation that leads up to "Who's the murderer?" happens automatically. From that point on you can choose to fight the Succubus at any point by saying "You're lying" or select "I'll talk to Ele'yas" at the dialogue's final branch if you want to side with the Succubus.

If you say you'll speak to Ele'yas, then return to the Cauldron. You can accuse Ele'yas of lying to you or say that you'll return to the Succubus. If you accuse him of lying, Ele'yas claims that he hasn't killed anyone. At this point, you can choose to believe him or not believe him. What you say doesn't actually matter; as soon as you talk to Ele'yas at all it sets up an alternative method of finishing the quest.

Go talk to Iorveth in the Vergen Outskirts. Say "Ele'yas is a murderer," Iorveth asks for proof. This is where the metal fragment you extracted with the surgical tools earlier becomes important. Without the metal fragment, there's no way to resolve the quest without killing the Succubus. If you have the metal fragment, you can offer it to Iorveth. He goes off to see Ele'yas, then quickly returns saying that Ele'yas has fled town. Return to the burned village.

When you step into the burned village, you find Ele'yas lying in wait for you. He's not an especially tough opponent, since he uses the basic Scoia'tael fighting style, but he does have a lot of vitality to whittle down. Like most elves, he is highly flammable, so mages and alchemists can make good use of incineration here. Once Ele'yas is defeated, go see the Succubus. She tells you to disrobe and relax, which means that you've got a chance to get Geralt some action. You can turn her down, but you don't gain anything from doing so.

Either way, after the Succubus is through with you, she says she left some gifts for you nearby. Loot a chest near the bed to get Thyssen's armor, which is otherwise unobtainable, and a handful of orens and a Rook potion. You also gain 200 XP and get to stagger around drunk on monster sex for a while if you slept with her. While Thyssen's armor is probably a little better than what you're wearing now and can definitely see you through the chapter, it's not as good as the armor of Loc Muinne that you can obtain later—unless you're playing an alchemist build. For an alchemist Geralt, the +50 percent bomb damage multiplier can be ridiculously potent, especially in the chapter's climactic sequences.

So which way of resolving this quest is better? Mechanically, they're about equal, unless you're playing an alchemist build. Both outcomes offer a unique but not incredibly useful item, a handful of orens, and the same amount of XP. Depending on your choices, killing the Succubus is much faster, but if you don't kill her then you get to trigger one of the game's handful of love scenes. Of course, siding with the Succubus is inevitably the more heroic of the two options, since you can confirm that Ele'yas really is the murderer and the Succubus really is innocent.

Where Is Triss Merigold?

Now is a good time to try to figure out what happened to Triss. First, head to Philippa Eilhart's house. Philippa says she could find Triss if she had one of her possessions. Geralt doesn't have anything, but Philippa suggests Geralt speak with a local drunkard who claims he saw a woman fall from the sky. Head to the Cauldron and speak with Mantas Birut, who is going to be standing near the innkeeper's bar just to the left of the entrance. Mantas offers to tell you his story in exchange for some mead. If you opt to buy him the mead, it opens up the interface you use for haggling. The maximum you can spend is randomly determined, but usually a very small amount of orens. Just spend the maximum bid to make sure you get Mantas talking.

If you want to spend fewer orens on mead, try to get the innkeeper to tell the story by saying "Not sure if it's worth it." He says he will if you pay for Mantas's wine. The price is randomly determined, but usually at least a little lower than the price of Mantas's mead. You get the information you need either way. The important thing is finding out that Triss and Letho dropped into the gullies southwest of Vergen. Exit through the Mahakam Gate and take a left at the group of Scoia'tael near the bonfire, or use the shortcut through the Tunnel of the Founders and go straight past the statue at the bottom of the path.

You come to a troll stirring a cauldron of soup. You can interrogate the troll, who is pretty docile initially. He tells you that he found Triss and her bandana, but his wife got jealous and ran off with it. The troll happily tells you where his wife went but asks you to promise not to kill her. At this point, you can choose to resolve the quest in a kindly way or a merciless way. Doing things in a kindly fashion counts toward the Friend of Trolls achievement if you also spared the troll in Chapter 1. Doing things the merciless way counts toward a secret achievement if you also killed the troll in Chapter 1.

If you want to do things the kindly way, just promise not to kill his wife. If you want to do things the merciless way, say "We'll see about that." The troll gets hostile and you get another dialogue sequence. If you say "I don't like to be threatened" at the branch after that, the troll tries to kill you. Fighting the troll isn't very difficult, as he's extremely slow. If you do kill him, be sure to loot the body.

Head into the gullies, following the quest marker. This area can be confusing, so don't hesitate to consult both the in-game mini-map and the guide's area map. You'll fight a lot of harpies and maybe some nekkers along the way. At the top of winding path, you should meet Adam Pangratt and a group of mercenaries with him, fighting the she-troll. If you promised the troll to bring his wife back alive, say "She needs to live." This pisses off Pangratt, who seems pretty determined to kill the she-troll. Eventually, if you want to save her, you're forced to fight Pangratt. He gives up once you reduce his vitality to zero or defeat all of his allies. Pangratt is immune to Combat Acumen's adrenaline ability and cannot be instant killed. After you've defeated Pangratt and/or his men, he surrenders and offers to give you some information about who hired him. Geralt then has a conversation with the mercenaries that confirms they're looking for Letho. Tell them to surrender to Saskia, which they agree to since they think you're an okay guy. Then you have cutscenes with the trolls. These are kind of useful in that they teleport you back down the mountain to the troll's lair, which means a shorter trip back to town. Say whatever you wish to the she-troll—she goes back to her husband either way.

If you do things this way, then you can go find Adam Pangratt later in the game in Vergen's prison. You can talk to him to find out some extra information about who ordered him to kill Letho and Triss. If you've put off doing **Death Symbolized**, then you can also get some extra information about the Dun Banner from Pangratt.

If you're being merciless, then agree to help Pangratt at the first dialogue branch with him. She is even easier to beat than her husband, thanks to the help of Pangratt's mercenaries. Be sure to loot her body to get Triss's bandana. Note that if you agreed not to kill the she-troll and do so anyway, the troll attacks you when you pass back through his territory.

So is it better to kill the trolls or leave them be? Mechanically, saving the trolls is much more lucrative, even though this is the last chance in the game you have to kill trolls for a troll trophy and the troll-killing achievement. By saving the trolls you get the troll horn and a vran armor enhancement. You can use the vran armor enhancement as a component for making some pretty powerful equipment in Chapter 3. You also obtain the troll horn, which makes the two trolls appear later in the game during the **Vergen Besieged** quest to help fight Henselt's army. While this doesn't really make **Vergen Besieged** any easier for you, it triggers some extra dialogue and cutscenes.

Whether the trolls are alive or dead, this quest doesn't actually resolve until you take the bandana back to Philippa and initiate a conversation with her. Say "I have Triss's bandana" to initiate the dialogue cutscene that resolves the quest. At the end of the cutscene that ends **Where Is Triss Merigold?**, you get a visit from a messenger saying that the peasants believe Prince Stennis poisoned Saskia and are clamoring for his blood. This automatically triggers the **Royal Blood** quest and awards you 1,500 XP for completing this quest.

Royal Blood

In this quest, Geralt plays detective and tries to uncover what really happened with Saskia's poisoning. Begin it by heading toward the Castle of Three Fathers, where a mob has gathered. Head toward the quest marker to initiate some cutscenes. After the cutscenes, Geralt needs to decide how to spend the time he has investigating. He can speak to two parties from a master list of six before cutscenes trigger that force him to render judgment. Here's the master list of all six parties you can speak with.

The nobles outside Stennis's room

The peasants

A fellow leaning against the wall

Zoltan and Dandelion

The three dwarves

Prince Stennis himself, but only if you can successfully use Axii on his guards

This may not seem intuitive, but the two most important parties to speak with are the three dwarves and the peasants. Everyone else can be kind of interesting, but they don't actually give you any worthwhile rewards or pertinent information about the murder. By speaking to the peasants and the three dwarves, you spawn two lucrative side quests that you can pursue to investigate the poisoning. Finishing them both can be very tricky. Go trigger these side quests, then make absolutely sure you don't return to the Castle of Three Fathers.

Side Quest: Suspect: Thorak

Go speak to the trio of dwarves standing in front of Iorveth in the castle. Among them is a founder, Ogden, who says he's made all of the tableware used in the council hall. While most of the tableware was decades old, Saskia was drinking from a new goblet. Ask the founder about it. This flags up the possibility of someone having made a duplicate goblet that was used in the poisoning. The founder says that Thorak might have tried it. Finish the conversation and go investigate Thorak. Ask him if he made Saskia's goblet. If Thorak is still alive, as he should be in your game, he says it was a wretched piece of work and he'd never turn out something like that. If you investigate Thorak's house, you find a suspicious locked chest that could contain something interesting. Leave this quest alone for now.

Side Quest: The Walls Have Ears

Go speak to the peasants gathered in the Castle of Three Fathers. They all but order Geralt to go find the servant who gave the poisoned wine to Saskia. Question them and you eventually find out the servant is under Scoia'tael guard at the Human Enclave (the one near the Castle of Three Fathers, not the one next to the Mahakam Gate). Go there and speak to one Willy Oblate. You have to use Axii or intimidation to get him to talk, but if he does then he gives up information that Priest Olcan (who's dead now) told Stennis that Saskia was really a monster. Willy also heard Stennis and the priest saying suspicious things outside Saskia's quarters. Since the priest is dead, you should go speak with Cecil Burdon. Ask him where Olcan was quartered. Once he marks your map, go search Olcan's room. It's at the Human Enclave next to the Mahakam Gate. You won't find anything in the pile of books on the floor, but search the desk to find Olcan's notes. So Olcan clearly commissioned a duplicate goblet, but you're not yet sure where it came from.

If you've followed the walkthrough's instructions exactly, you should now have both of the **Royal Blood** side quests triggered and a point where tracking them in your journal says "Wait for events to unfold." This means you can now...completely ignore the **Royal Blood** quest. No, really. You're going to go do the last major quest line remaining in the chapter, which is going to give you the last piece of evidence you need to confirm whether or not Stennis is guilty of anything and where the duplicate goblet came from. **Royal Blood** won't resolve until you speak to a third potential set of witnesses, so you should have no trouble moving on to do other things for a while.

Hunting Magic

First, initiate this quest by going to Philippa Eilhart's house and asking her about a magic artifact. She tells you to go talk to Cecil Burdon about potential candidates, so go do that. Say "Saskia needs medicine" to trigger the dialogue you need. He gives you Cecil's map, which marks the location of a place that magicians are known to favor. After that, exit Vergen through the Old Gate and head north. Remember that area where you always get jumped by harpies? It should be around the base of an area on your mini-map that's shaped like a hook. Go there, slay any harpies in the area, and then climb to the top of the hook-shaped ridge.

At the end of the ridge, you get the prompt to leap across onto a small butte. Once there, you are probably going to be attacked by more harpies. Slay them, loot the bodies, then leap across to the central plateau marked on Cecil's map (and in the guide). Once on the plateau, expect to be attacked by about a half dozen harpies led by a celaeno harpy. Swordsman builds should have little trouble handling this many harpies through brute force. Mages want to use Igni and Axii, while alchemists equipped with Thyssen's armor can do devastating damage with dancing stars and furies. After you've slain the harpies, loot the bodies and then climb up to where the harpies kept their nest. By searching it, you should find a magic crystal. Take the item back to Philippa and say "I have a magic crystal."

Next, go talk to Cecil Burdon again. You want to get him to open a gate in the Old Quarry. Once the gate is open, you can progress this quest and clean out a bunch of side quests all in one shot. Go to Cecil and say "I need to reach the harpy lair." By the end of the cutscene, Cecil agrees, but you have to bully him a little bit first. Next, go pick up a couple of side quests from the notice board outside the Cauldron (if you haven't already gotten them all).

Side Quest: The Harpy Contract

The Queen Harpy Contract

The Old Quarry is teeming with harpies and you can earn some extra orens by destroying their nests and slaying their queen, in addition to picking up the dream crystal you need to fulfill **Hunting Magic**. To destroy the harpy nests, you need to go manufacture some harpy traps. You can buy the diagram of the harpy trap from Haggard, Earso, or Thorak or acquire it by reading the book *Harpies: Daughters of the Gale*. You need to make exactly seven of them, no more and no less. Set out for the Old Quarry. Use the Tunnel of the Founders shortcut to get there quickly if you can. Before you enter the quarry itself, take a right to head into the cabin nearby.

Side Quest: A Sackful of Fluff

The cabin belongs to a fellow named Elthon, who offers Geralt work as he passes by. He says he knows a collector in Vengerberg who pays well for harpy feathers. He begins by asking you to bring him 12 if you agree to the quest (which you should). You may already have 12 harpy feathers on hand. Elthon pays three orens per feather for the first 12, which is considerably below the usual nine orens you'd get for selling harpy feathers. Sell them anyway, since what you're really trying to get out of this quest is a unique item rather than orens. Try to argue up the price as high as you can when you have a chance.

After you give him 12, he asks for 60 more feathers. If you don't already have the feathers on hand, go kill harpies for a while down in the quarry or in the area to the north of the pond. Remember that the harpies respawn roughly once every 12 hours. When you give Elthon the 60 feathers, how much you're paid depends on how you argued earlier. The highest possible price is around 20 orens per feather, which is much higher than their market value. If you humor Elthon's next request by saying "Let me hear it," you get asked to bring by 8 more. Elthon gives you 100 orens for the last batch of feathers. Go do something else for a while—maybe kill a few more harpies.

Come back after some time has passed if you want to see why Elthon really wanted all of those feathers. After you pick your jaw up off the floor, engage in some small talk with Elthon. After the conversation finishes, **A Sackful of Fluff** resolves. You don't get any XP for finishing this quest, but you do get Elthon's trophy. While Elthon's trophy is not mechanically super-good, you can wear it during major story cutscenes to transform *The Witcher 2* into a delightfully surrealist comedy.

Elthon is named in homage to flamboyant pop singer Elton John, who was famous for wearing brightly colored feather boas.

Side Quest: The Harpy Contract

Once you enter the Old Quarry, you need to slowly work your way down to the quarry's bottom, where the gate into the harpy lair is located. You will be attacked four times by large groups of harpies, usually right as you pass by a nest. It is possible, though rare, for all of the harpies in the quarry to spawn simultaneously and move to attack you at once. This creates serious problems for fulfilling **The Harpy Contract**. If this happens to you, retreat from the Old Quarry to some safe area and meditate for about a day. When you return, see if the harpy spawns work normally (i.e., harpies only attack you as you near a nest). You need the four harpy groups to come at you one at a time in order to easily complete **The Harpy Contract**.

To complete this quest, you need to destroy the four nests in the area. The nests are extremely difficult to see from the ground, and even when you can see them, you can't reach them. You can only destroy a nest by getting a harpy to pick up and carry a harpy trap back into it. The easiest way to track the proximate location of the harpy nests is to move forward slowly down the quarry's slope and stop when a group of harpies starts to attack you.

When harpies first approach you, quickly set down a harpy trap and back away. Note that you should only do this when a standard harpy approaches you, not a celaeno or an erynia, as they don't have the AI to pick up a trap. If you accidentally misplace a harpy trap, you can pull it up and add it back to your stack, much like a snare. A normal harpy is immediately distracted by the harpy trap and picks it up, taking it back to the nest. You should hear an explosion a few moments later, signifying that the nest was destroyed. If you track **The Harpy Contract** quest, it will display exactly how many nests you've destroyed. This is the best way to keep track of when you've destroyed a nest; the moment a blast goes off the counter goes up. After you destroy a nest, stay in the area and defeat the waves of harpies as they attack you. Once there are no more harpies coming after you, loot the bodies, return to give feathers to Elthon if you're doing **A Sackful of Fluff**, and then head farther down into the spiraling quarry pit.

Battling the harpies should be trivial for most Geralt builds, save when they throng around you in groups of five or six. Then you're getting attacked so often that even a maxed-out Quen won't last long. When battling large groups, mages can use any number of signs but particularly Axii or leveled-up Igni to keep the harpies from getting overwhelming. Alchemists should focus on trying to set the harpies on fire with dancing stars, laying fury traps, and keeping defensive potion buffs up. Swordsmen need to bull through using brute force, though Whirl and Combat Acumen skills can be extremely useful here.

Caution

As you move down the quarry path, you occasionally get the "magic or danger" vibrations from Geralt's medallion. These warnings do not relate to this quest. They relate to another quest that you won't be able to trigger until this one, and the rest of the harpy quests that relate to the **Hunting Magic** line, are completed.

After you've bombed all four harpy nests and reached the bottom of the quarry, look around to find a corpse carrying some Temerian jackboots and other loot. There's also a circle of power you can activate. If you follow the ridge above the door, you find a locked chest. This is part of the **Baltimore's Nightmare** quest line, so you'll return to it later. The chest is locked, so you can't do anything with it now. Proceed through the now-unlocked gate into the harpy lair. While in the harpy lair, you are occasionally attacked at certain set points by groups of celaeno harpies. You tend to fight in very close quarters in the lair, so be careful during the battle.

Explore the harpy lair, setting harpy traps whenever you enter a new area where ordinary harpies are spawning. That always indicates one of the nests is nearby. You can pick up the entirely decent Kaedweni leather armor off of a corpse you pass by. After you've destroyed the seventh harpy nest you get the Birdman character attribute, which is going to come in handy in the battle against the queen harpy. Note also that destroying all of the nests counts toward the Pest Control achievement.

When you reach a pale blue dream crystal stuck into a wall, be sure to take it. A group of celaeno harpies attacks you, but by now you should've worked out a method to dispatch them quickly. Just beyond is the area of branching pathways at the rear of the lair. Begin circling around counterclockwise. At the end of each of the dead-end branches of the path is a dream crystal you should pick up. Fight off the celaeno harpies that patrol this area and pick up any extra loot you find. None of it is especially good, but there's no point in leaving anything behind. If you circle the area counterclockwise, then you come to the area that was initially on Geralt's left last. As you approach it, you trigger a cutscene.

The Assassins of Kings

This cutscene is the main thing that advances **The Assassins of Kings** on this branch of Chapter 2. You see a harpy stick one of the dream crystals into a projector, which lets you see that the dream is Letho's. This reveals that Letho has an accomplice in his kingslaying and that he's in the area, in addition to revealing the dream projector and how it works. You can take Letho's pink dream crystal from the projector, but doing so triggers a battle that can be very difficult. Make some preparations first.

Side Quest: The Queen Harpy Contract

Removing the crystal from the projector summons the queen harpy and her absurdly large court of celaeno harpy followers, around eight in all. Prepare for this battle by first preparing potions appropriate to your build and combat strategies. Next, scatter traps around the room around the projector. Conflagrations and furies work particularly well here, but you can also do quite a bit of damage with plain old snares. Finally, brew up some dancing stars to use as emergency crowd control measures. If you're playing an alchemist Geralt with a lot of bomb damage bonuses, make a ton of these and they can see you through the battle. Just don't let the harpies gang up on you and you should be fine. After you kill the harpy queen, you can loot her body to receive the silver sword Harpy. It probably isn't as good as what you're using already, but it's not bad.

Approach the projector and slot the dreams in, one by one, to figure out which one is the most powerful. The silver crystal turns out to be Baltimore's final dream, which lets you pursue the side quest **Baltimore's Nightmare**. The green crystal turns out to be a bawdy peasant dream about Saskia, which is kind of funny but not too useful. The red crystal is the dream of the dragon who attacked you at La Valette Castle, which probably contains a lot of power. The blue crystal is Iorveth dreaming about good food in elvish, which is sad but not entirely surprising.

Discovering the dragon's dream completes **Hunting Magic** and awards you 1,000 XP. Now that the harpy hunt is over, head back to town to wrap up a few of those quests and bring some good news to Philippa. If you need to give Elthon feathers to complete **A Sackful of Fluff**, you should be able to do so on the way back. First speak to Cecil Burdon and tell him you destroyed the harpy nests. This is worth 100 XP, 200 orens, a dwarven enhancement, and a fire rune. This is worth 100 XP, 200 orens, and a fire rune. Next, tell Cecil you killed the harpy queen, for an additional 50 orens. These conversations should resolve **The Harpy Contract** and **The Queen Harpy Contract**. Now, it's time to do **Baltimore's Nightmare**.

Side Quest: Baltimore's Nightmare

Begin by investigating Baltimore's old house, which is conveniently right next door to Cecil's. This triggers a cutscene and updates the quest, so that your next task is to discuss Baltimore with Thorak and his pals working the anvil nearby. After the conversation, you can enter Baltimore's house. Loot the room, then use Aard to knock over the false wall toward the rear of the building. Behind the false wall is a small silver chest tucked into the wall. This gives you Baltimore's directions and Baltimore's key. The directions are a riddle meant to lead you somewhere. For now, take Baltimore's key back to the Old Quarry so you can open the chest hidden there.

As you exit Baltimore's house, Thorak stops you and asks you what you found. Tell him "Yeah" if you want more options for finishing the quest, though by lying to him you can still get the quest's best possible outcome. Go back to the chest in the quarry to see what's inside. Open it to receive the runic key, which opens...well, you don't actually know yet. You need to explore.

Specifically, head to the shipwreck indicated on your map, far to the southwest. To get there, go to the trolls' dwelling, then beyond into the gullies. Instead of heading left as you did when you were seeking the she-troll, go right. When you find the ship, examine the cliff faces to see if you can find a patch of the stone covered by vines. The ship should be on your right and the entrance to your left as you enter the area. When you step into the cave, quickly loot the room. Once you've looted the chest that contains Baltimore's notes and the beaver cap, Thorak appears and a cutscene begins.

If you lied to Thorak earlier, then he goes straight to declaring that he's going to kill you and take Baltimore's notes. If you told him the truth, though, he offers to let you have everything in the chest except Baltimore's notes. He even offers to throw in a lifetime discount at his shop, which would be nice if he didn't have one of the crappiest shop selections in Vergen. You can take Thorak up on his offer, but if you do, then you can't finish **Suspect: Thorak**, which means you can't finish **The Walls Have Ears**.

If you want to finish these other two quests, you really need to kill him so you can loot Thorak's key off his body. Say "I don't like shady deals" to initiate a combat with him. Thorak and his men have a lot of vitality but pretty lousy reach, so you shouldn't have any problems defeating them. If they begin to overwhelm you, toss some bombs or use Axii to turn one against his comrades. Be sure to loot Thorak's key after the battle, and also loot the chest. You should get the beaver cap you can use as part of **Death Symbolized**. Baltimore's notes (which make it clear that Thorak murdered him), and some runes.

Side Quest: Mystic River

Before you head back to town, examine the shipwreck to progress this quest. You should find a chest that's glittering orange. Loot it to get the journal of the Eyla Tarn, which discusses a treasure discovered beneath Loc Muinne. You'll be able to search for it in the next chapter, but for now you've done all you can with this quest.

Side Quest: Suspect: Thorak

The Walls Have Ears

Head back to Thorak's house so you can use Thorak's key on the locked chest inside. Open it to obtain Olcan's receipt, a diagram for the robust yellow meteorite sword, and 200 orens. You also automatically obtain 1,000 XP for successfully completing **Suspect: Thorak** and roughly the same amount over again for completing **The Walls Have Ears**. You may level up two or three times, just off of opening Thorak's chest at exactly the right time.

Now that these two quests are complete, go talk to Cecil Burdon to resolve **Baltimore's Nightmare**. It is essential that you absolutely do not do this before opening Thorak's chest to finish **Suspect: Thorak** and **The Walls Have Ears**. The XP payoff for finishing these quests is huge, but doing anything in the quest chain out of order causes the quest chain to be impossible to complete.

For instance, if you complete **Baltimore's Nightmare** before initiating **Royal Blood**, chances are Thorak is dead and so you can't initiate **Suspect: Thorak**. If you can't initiate **Suspect: Thorak**, then you can't finish **The Walls Have Ears** and it's automatically failed at the end of the chapter, no matter what you do. Now that the quests are complete, you can show Baltimore's notes to Cecil Burdon to get 300 XP, 60 orens, and Gwyhyr, the best steel sword available in this chapter. Slot it with runes and you'll be well-prepared for the chapter's final quests.

Royal Blood

Now you need to resolve this quest by passing judgment. If you've done the **Suspect: Thorak** and **The Walls Have Ears** quests, it's fairly obvious what happened: Olcan commissioned a duplicate goblet to carry poisoned wine from Thorak and made the switch just before the toast at the war council. Based on what you know from speaking with the peasants and Willy Oblate, you know that Olcan couldn't possibly have pulled this off without Stennis's help. Stennis is probably guilty, if not beyond the shadow of a doubt.

So you face a fairly major decision here. You can turn Stennis over to the mob's justice by saying "The prince is guilty." You can choose to spare his life by saying "A lynching would be a bad idea." If you choose to let the mob execute Stennis, then you can discreetly gather some of his blood after he passes on and use that to cure Saskia. That resolves this quest very easily, if a bit cruelly. You are awarded 1,000 XP and the elven gauntlets, which all but alchemist Geralt builds should find a little bit better than the herbalist's gloves. You can also loot Stennis's body to get Stennis's sword, which is not especially good but is otherwise unobtainable.

If you choose to let Stennis live, then you can't get any of his blood. You get no XP and you don't get the elven gauntlets right now. You instead obtain them later. If Stennis lives, then resolving **Royal Blood** means sneaking into the Kaedweni Camp and getting Henselt to give you some of his blood a bit later in the game. If you do things this way, then you get the 1,000 XP for resolving the quest and the elven gauntlets after you've successfully gotten Henselt's blood. Getting into Henselt's tent involves a stealth sequence that isn't especially difficult, but it is something you can skip entirely if Stennis pays for his crime.

Neither decision is more lucrative than the other in the long run, nor is either decision treated as more heroic. Both outcomes raise some troubling ethical issues. If you pronounce the prince guilty he's lynched, and if you spare him he later betrays Saskia in Chapter 3. If you dislike stealth missions, then you may want to let Stennis die just to avoid the one with Henselt. Otherwise, you should simply make the decision that you think makes sense for how you roleplay as Geralt in your game.

Where Is Triss Merigold?

Regardless of whether Stennis lives or dies, go talk to Philippa Eilhart. This time you hear that Geralt thinks is the sound of another massage before he walks in, but he finds out he's incredibly wrong. Eilhart says that she's going to help Geralt cross the mist to find Triss. Before you depart, you should get the tattoo from **Hung Over** removed (if you want to do that and haven't already), and be sure to ask Philippa about the Wild Hunt. These are strictly optional activities, but this will be your last chance to do them.

After you ask Philippa about the hunt and have the Wild Hunt investigator's notes you acquired during **Death Symbolized**, you can mention them and she directs you to discuss the Wild Hunt with Cynthia. Speaking with Cynthia lets you find out a lot of truths about the hunt that you otherwise will not stumble over in the course of the game. Given the importance of the Wild Hunt to the **Returning Memories** quest, you probably want to do this so you understand a bit more about Geralt's situation.

When you're ready to begin the quest, exit through the Mahakam Gate. Head past the burned village and enter the fog near the Scoia'tael bonfire. Be ready to fight a large number of wraiths and draugir as you pass back across the battlefield, guided by Philippa's owl form. This time you don't have any allies helping you, but you should be all around much stronger, with more skills and better equipment. Alchemists should make sure they've applied appropriate potion buffs and created a store of specter oil for the journey. Mages and swordsmen can probably get through with no special preparations. You should encounter two or three draugir with wraith escorts. Once you're through the mist and across the Pontar, look around to find a dead body you can loot to obtain Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's order. Next, head toward the quest marker to trigger a cutscene where you obtain an interesting item and meet up with Roche. After Roche berates you a bit, he gives you instructions for how you can get into the Nilfgaardian camp, either by using a secret tunnel infested with monsters or by sneaking through the canteen. Before you select either, take a detour to do a quick side quest.

Caution

Once you are on the other side of the fog, you cannot meditate. This is one of the few sequences in the game where time basically stops passing. No matter what you do or how long you take, it will remain night until you complete all of the quest objectives here and return to Vergen.

Side Quest: From a Bygone Era

You're only supposed to do this quest on Roche's route, but there's nothing from stopping you beginning it on Iorveth's route if you know where to find Malget's house. It's marked on your map, along with the area just southwest of Roche's Camp where you need to cross the river. You can only get to Malget's house by approaching from this direction. Stop by Roche's Camp to loot the place before you go.

When you get to Malget's house, you find it's a little hut that overlooks a beach infested by drowners. The inside of the hut is empty, but beside it you find some barrels you can interact with to blow them up using Aard. Before you do this, head down the little path southwest of the hut that leads to the graveyard. Make special note of the sigils etched on Malget's grave marker: down arrow, diamond, up arrow. Now go blow up the barrels. Be sure to approach the barrels from the front side of the house, or the interaction prompt you need won't appear. Beneath the barrels is a trap door. Enter it to find an area where three candles stand on three podiums.

One podium is marked with a wooden diamond, another with a down arrow, and another with an up arrow. You want to light candles by interacting with them in the order of the marks etched on Malget's grave marker: first the down arrow candle, then the diamond candle, then the up arrow candle. If you light the candles in the incorrect sequence, you must battle a wraith. If you light them in the correct sequence, a hidden door set into a stone wall slides open. Enter it to find a desk and a bookshelf. If you scan with your medallion you won't find anything, but approach the desk anyway. You should get a prompt to interact with the desk to pick up Malget's notes.

Now that you have them, you can take them to someone who can decipher them in Chapter 3. You have more options for what to do with the notes on Roche's route, but on Iorveth's route this is really all you can do with them.

Hidden Arachas

Head a bit north of the Camp Followers' Encampment, toward the mountainous region. Don't enter the mountains; instead head a bit to the east and investigate the gullies there. You may encounter nekkers along the way.

As you're poking around, you should come to a point where your medallion vibrates automatically. Nearby there's an area where you can drop down into a deep ravine. Pause here to meditate and drink some potions, including Mongoose. Oil your silver blade with insectoid oil.

When you drop into the ravine, you find that an arachas has made its lair there. This fight is quite dangerous, as it's impossible to flank the arachas in this terrain. You have to approach it head-on. When it starts blocking, you can only roll backwards. On the other hand, Yrden is quite effective here because the arachas has no way to evade your sigils.

Once you defeat this arachas, you can loot the mage gloves from its lair. As the name suggests, this item is very useful for mage builds.

The Visionary

You can also head north and investigate the Visionary's cabin while you're on this side of the river. In this case, talking to him won't initiate any of the quests he's involved in on Roche's path. You can still ask him questions and pick up the Visionary's notes (I) and (II) at his cabin, though. This provides a little bit of flavor for what happened involving Sabrina Glevissig that you otherwise don't get on Iorveth's route.

Where Is Triss Merigold?

Head back to the north side of the river to decide how you're going to finish the quest. Basically, if you head to the quest marker far to the north of your map, you're going to sneak through the Kaedweni Camp to reach the Nilfgaardian Camp. This is not a mutually exclusive decision. If you sneak through the Kaedweni camp, you get to enter the same cave, fight all of the same monsters, and grab all the same loot. Sneaking through the camp gives you the Child of the Night character attribute while using the camp followers' entrance is really expensive, so there's absolutely no reason not to sneak through the camp. Still, here are both ways to get into the cave.

If You Bribe the Camp Followers

Go find the camp followers Roche mentioned. They're also labeled on the guide map, and you should be able to easily follow an in-game quest marker there. Speak to a character named Madame Carole, who should be very easy to find in the small camp area. You can also play dice with her if you like, offer to spend some money on a whore, or just talk to her about the cave entrance. The whores here are pretty much like the whores you encountered in Chapter 1, so the usual caveat about spending orens on whores applies.

Madame Carole only talks to you if you're willing to pay up. If you agree to that, then you can ask her some questions. If you ask her "Know how I could get inside the camp?" she immediately says that will cost you. If you say "I'll pay you," then the usual bribery interface comes up. Her maximum rate is randomly determined, but she always lets you in with any bid of 500 orens or more.

When you successfully bribe Madame Carole, she gives you the old tower key. You can scan the brothel for random loot before you enter, but you probably won't find a whole lot. Instead, head into the open prison cell at the rear of the old tower. Poke around the small area you enter to find another trap door that drops you down into the secret cave. Immediately prepare to fight a second bullvore, which means basically every build should drink a Mongoose potion. Otherwise, the bullvore should be fairly easy to kill at your current level of power, especially if you have an optimal silver sword. Loot the bullvore's body and hope you get a bullvore trophy if you didn't the first time.

Head deeper into the cave. You won't find a whole lot except low-level random loot until you come to what's marked on the map as "Rotfiends." In the cave, it's a ledge you must climb up. Beyond it is all of the cave's best loot, guarded by rotfiends and a golem.

If You Sneak through the Kaedweni Camp

This stealth sequence is probably very different from what you're expecting. It's not like the initial scene in La Valette Castle, which is all about perfect positioning and knocking guards out. For this sequence, all you need to do is stick to the shadows and not get noticed by any of the guards wandering around the camp. This is surprisingly simple, and all the landmarks you need to pull it off are labeled on the guide's map of this area.

Begin by crouching with the canteen within sight. Wait for a drunk to stumble out. This guy is so drunk he won't notice you, so you can safely creep over to the fire burning next to the canteen door and extinguish it. Do the same to the fire burning in front of the tent opposite the canteen. From there, creep forward just a bit. If you draw near enough to the drunk while staying unobserved, he goes to join his two fellows by a nearby campfire. This causes the men to stand up and turn their backs to you. Now, spring across the camp's main road to crouch by the large palisade. A man stands in front of it sharpening a sword, so you want to go around it from the back by going up a wooden ramp. A guard patrols here, but he's easy to stun.

Pause on the palisade's far side. This is a good point to save your game. Wait at least a few moments to see if a group of soldiers walks out of the building next to you. There should be five in all, if the group appears. When the five are well past you, you can sprint across to the two long lines of tents on the western side of the map. You want to be in between the two rows of tents as shown on the map, as this area is in shadow and will keep you mostly out of sight. Loot the dwarven enhancement out of the chest next to you. Creep slowly forward until you come up behind a soldier who is taking a piss. Wait for him to finish and walk away.

Now, dash down to the cook who's stirring the pot near the camp's west wall. When you draw near to him, you have a chance to interact to use Axii on him successfully. You need to hammer your interaction button repeatedly until a meter is full for the sign to be successful. This makes the cook decide to lie down and go to sleep. Loot the steel plate enhancement from the chest near him, then sprint toward the camp's gates. You should get a prompt to interact in order to open the door and step out.

Outside, there's a scout gazing through a spyglass with his back toward you. Sneak up on him and stun him with your strong attack button. From here, just move toward your in-game quest marker to find the cave's entrance. You should get the Child of the Night attribute when you drop down into the cave and also unlock the Black Ops achievement. If you want to fight the bullvore, go right once you're inside the cave. As you move toward the bullvore, you should find a Kaedweni soldier's corpse you can loot for a steel plate enhancement. Before you fight it, pause to drink a Mongoose potion at the very least. Otherwise, the bullvore should be fairly easy to kill at your current level of power, especially if you have an optimal silver sword. Loot the bullvore's body and hope you get a bullvore trophy if you didn't the first time. After that, head toward the rotfiend pack marked on the cave map. Read on to finish the sequence.

Looting the Cave

This should be trivial, since if you buffed yourself with potions to fight the bullvore, your potion buffs should still apply. Quickly head toward the passage where the golem lurks. Activate the circle of strength near its entrance, then plunge through.

Fighting the golem is much like fighting the bullvore. This battle may be difficult for alchemist builds due to the close quarters, but swordsmen can easily bull through with strong attacks. Mages can get a lot of hits in by using signs to stun the monster, then counterattacking. Alchemists may want to focus on stunning bombs. Loot the golem's body once it's dead, then loot the room. You should find plenty of orens, lots of low-level loot, the Kaedweni jackboots, the armor of Ban Ard, and a massive stack of poisoned harpy claws.

After the golem is dead, finish looting the point of no return, decide what you want to keep and what you need to drop, and then exit the cave. Round the bend after you exit to find a Nilfgaardian soldier. Approach him to initiate a dialogue scene. One way or another, you're forced to give up your swords before you can see Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen.

During the dialogue with Shilard, you can say basically whatever you like. There are no deaths by cutscene lurking here, despite the danger, just chances to gather a little more information through the remarks you make. You should find out some information that advances both **The Assassins of Kings** (that Letho is the last surviving kingslayer) and **Returning Memories** (Geralt has a flashback to tracking the Wild Hunt). Eventually, it's revealed in the cutscene that the figurine you found earlier actually contained Triss, who was transformed into a different, smaller figurine hidden inside it. You find out Cynthia is a traitor actually in the employ of a sorcerer named Vanhemar, who is going to kill you.

Or is he? It seems Roche was persuaded by your words earlier, because he and Ves arrive to start slaying the Nilfgaardian guards and help set you free. Once you're freed, grab a sword and equip the poisoned harpy claws you picked up in the cave to your pockets. Now you get to battle Vanhemar. His tactics are very similar to Letho's, only instead of attacking with a sword he occasionally teleports around the battlefield. Vanhemar protects himself with Quen and throws fireballs, similar to the Succubus (if you fought her earlier).

Since he doesn't move around a lot, traps and Yrden aren't very reliable here. Thrown daggers are excellent for trying to interrupt his spell animations, while an alchemist Geralt with hefty bomb damage bonuses can use strong bombs to try and knock Vanhemar's Quen down rapidly. Mage and swordsman Geralts should keep their own Quen up. Mages can use Axii to control the Nilfgaardian guards, or try to use leveled-up Aard to knock Vanhemar's Quen down. Swordsman builds may just want to beat down Vanhemar's Quen with their own sword swings, though this does leave you vulnerable to being ganged up on by the guards. That said, if you focus on Vanhemar and have a bit of luck, you can defeat him well before you need to deal with the Nilfgaardian camp guards.

After Vanhemar and his guards are killed, a dialogue scene with Roche begins. This is another one where you can say whatever you like and get some interesting exposition in return. At the end of the dialogue, say "I want to look around the Nilfgaardian camp first." This lets you loot the bodies of the foes you just defeated, which you really want to do. Wherever Vanhemar's body fell, you should be able to loot the armor of Loc Muinne, the chapter's best armor for mages and swordsmen. Equip and fully slot it with the best enhancements you've got for your current build. If you're playing an alchemist, you're probably already using Thyssen's armor. You can also snag the Nilfgaardian jackboots from a chest toward the rear of the camp and loot Shilard's tent for the book *The Song of the Hunt*, Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's first letter to the emperor, and some random loot that tends to be mostly equipment. When you're ready to escape the Kaedweni Camp, speak to Roche. Read on if Prince Stennis is dead in your game, if he is alive and you still need to finish **Royal Blood**.

If Prince Stennis Is Dead

Roche has a plan that involves passing you off as his prisoner. You can get two different sequences here, depending on whether Stennis is alive or dead. If Stennis is dead, then the sequence is fairly simple. Let Roche march you through the camp and fast-talk the guard into letting the two of you out. Be careful not to draw near any of the officers. You can identify them by their helmets, which they wear with the faceplates flipped up. If you approach any of the three officers in the camp, you die instantly. One of the officers stands ahead of you near a fire, a second is to your right near a makeshift arena, and the third is walking toward you from the left. You can simply wait by the group of men on your left near the tent for the officer to pass by, then head toward the exit.

Once outside, you're freed. Now you need to return to where Philippa is waiting for you and cross back over the cursed battlefield. When you emerge on the Vergen side of the mist, a group of wraiths and Aedirnian knight wraiths follow you out. You can run on to Vergen and ignore them, or fight them alongside the Scoia'tael that patrol the area. Go speak to Philippa in her home to resolve this quest. You receive 2,250 XP, the Aedirnian Special Forces cockade, and the silver sword Negotiator as your reward. Negotiator is noteworthy for its high chance of inflicting the rare freeze critical effect. Although it is inferior to other swords found in this chapter in terms of raw damage, it can be very potent (and entertaining) in the hands of a Geralt built for swordsmanship.

If Prince Stennis Is Alive

If Stennis is alive, then you can't leave before getting some of Henselt's blood. Roche reluctantly agrees to help you get some. To begin with, follow Roche into the camp. When Roche says "Geralt, hide!" go crouch behind the stack of boxes. Wait as Roche leads the Kaedweni away. Creep toward the fire pit off to your right and interact to put it out, just for a little extra insurance. Make your way around the rear of the tents. Do not step into the center of the camp for any reason.

When you get to Henselt's tent, creep around the rear of it. Be careful to say well away from the firelight. Use Aard on the conveniently located stack of barrels you find behind Henselt's tent. This distracts the guards watching the entrance to his tent. Once you're sure they're gone, make a quick dash into Henselt's tent. Once the cutscenes start up, you're safe.

During the dialogue sequence, you can say pretty much whatever you like. Eventually Henselt agrees to give you his blood, and then his soldiers escort you to the camp followers' encampment. You get 1,000 XP for resolving **Royal Blood**. Now you need to meet up with Philippa and pass back through to Vergen through the mist.

When you emerge on the Vergen side of the mist, a group of wraiths and Aedirnian knight wraiths follow you out. You can run on to Vergen and ignore them, or fight them alongside the Scoia'tael that patrol the area. Go speak to Philippa in her home to resolve this quest. You receive 2,250 XP, the Aedirnian Special Forces cockade, and the silver sword Negotiator as your reward. Negotiator is noteworthy for its high chance of inflicting the rare freeze critical effect. Although it is inferior to other swords found in this chapter in terms of raw damage, it can be very potent (and entertaining) in the hands of a Geralt built for swordsmanship.

A Matter of Life and Death

Hatred Symbolized

It's time to heal Saskia. Accomplishing that causes **Hatred Symbolized** to automatically resolve, since Saskia has Vandergrift's sword, so you can kill two birds with one stone. Go talk to Philippa Eilhart in her house. Say "I have all the ingredients needed to heal Saskia." This automatically starts a cutscene featuring one of the most hilarious lines of dialogue in the game. During the cutscene when you get to make a dialogue choice, you can just say whatever you want here. You gain no XP for resolving either quest.

The Eternal Battle

Make sure you're prepared for a major battle with a unique enemy as part of this quest. Your equipment and how you've invested in Geralt's skills make a major difference in this battle. This enemy is mostly immune to critical effects but very vulnerable to being stunned or staggered. Alchemists should make preparations accordingly. Note that you can't use potions while battling this enemy, but you can make good use of traps.

Mages who haven't leveled up Aard or Yrden are a bit boned here and should maybe get a stack of Zerrikanian suns or Talgar winters beforehand. Quen can be an effective defense in this battle, but you shouldn't rely on it completely. A mage who has Aard III or Yrden III should have no trouble.

Swordsmen are going to end up relying on maneuverability and how specialized they are for hitting hard with every blow. Quen can help with defense, but not as much as levels of Feet Work. A swordsman build should be, by this point in the game, well-equipped for handling this quest's challenges. If you're a struggling swordsman, there's no shame in prepping a pile of Zerrikanian suns or Talgar winters just in case.

Note that after you do this quest, you set up a sequence where all of the merchants in Vergen shut down. If you want any items to carry with you into Chapter 3, particularly the diagram of draug armor, then you may want to buy them now. After you've made whatever preparations you think are necessary, go talk to Philippa Eilhart. Say "I'm ready to lift the curse." Philippa gives you the medallion you need for this quest and Seltkirk's armor. Take them into the cursed battlefield.

Once you trigger this quest, you go into a sequence where Geralt is possessed by the spirit of a soldier who must cut down the standard bearer of the Dun Banner. The standard bearer has taken the form of a draugir and you must defeat it without access to Quen or dodge rolls or any of your usual witcher tricks. You also have no NPCs to aid you, while the draugir is aided by three knights. You need to work on trying to eliminate the three knights without losing too much vitality. Focus on trying to flank or get behind your enemies. If your Geralt build has Riposte, that skill carries over and is useful here. Be careful while keeping your distance, as the edges of the battlefield around the draugir are wreathed in flames that absolutely will incinerate and kill you. On the other hand, you can drive enemies into the flames to do pretty serious damage.

The second part of the sequence requires you to play as a Kaedweni soldier who is tasked with telling his commander that his unit needs reinforcements. Sadly, he must do this while running a gauntlet of flaming arrows fired by archers from his own side. There are wooden structures on the field you can use for cover, but huddle behind them too long and the flaming arrows destroy them. You need to move quickly from cover point to cover point between volleys of the flaming arrows. Each of the volleys is heralded by the sound of a horn. Basically, if the volley heralded by a horn won't hit you, then choose that moment to move to fresh cover. After you make it to the last cover point indicated on the map, you can simply walk forward to trigger cutscenes.

For the third part of the sequence, you are possessed by Seltkirk of Gulet. For this, you simply need to move near Vandergrift's position. You must fight two groups of Kaedweni knights on the way in. Seltkirk has massive amounts of vitality, as part of modeling how he was the best Aedirnian knight ever, so you should have little trouble defeating the groups of Kaedweni. When approaching the second group, it is sometimes possible to lure one or two knights away from the main body by inching slowly down the path. As you draw near the draug's position (for Vandergrift has become a draug after death), a draugir materializes that is his standard bearer. A cutscene ensues as you approach it, and before this battle, you get to control Geralt once more. Get the draugir down to about half vitality to trigger another cutscene.

Now, for the climax of this quest: You must battle Vandergrift's spirit, magnified by the curse into the form of a draug. A draug is basically a pile of fire and hatred, its body made of animated metal. As you might expect, it has both a massive pile of vitality and a separate meter of additional armor strength. There is nothing sneaky or tricky you have to do here to whittle that down, as in the kayran fight. You just have to survive long enough to beat the living hell out of it. Talgar winters do significant damage to it, while also cutting its charging attacks short. The draug is also subject to Negotiator's freeze critical effect. Aard and Yrden at higher levels stagger it, as can an alchemist build's Zerrikanian sun. The draug can shrug off weak stun effects. It is very vulnerable to being hit from behind due to its massive size, a weakness any build with levels of Feet Work can exploit.

Be sure to beat on the draug mercilessly whenever it's staggered. Roll away when the draug turns into a whirlwind of armor fragments. Never let yourself get too far away from the draug, though. The draug punishes you for trying to play keep away by having its archers rain down hails of arrows, and its artillery uses trebuchets to rain fireballs on the field. You can evade the fireballs by dodge-rolling away from areas on the ground that turn red, and evade the arrows by simply dodge-rolling in any single direction to get clear. The danger of evading like this, of course, is that you're so far away from the draug when its rain of arrows or fire stops that it decides to just do it again.

If you can manage to play the zone game correctly and evade the draug's attacks without getting too far away from it, you should dish out enough damage to take it down. Once you get through its armor meter, it begins taking damage rapidly. You get a ton of loot for defeating it, including some materials necessary for creating the draug armor. You should also unlock the Fat Man achievement.

There's one more phase to the quest. Now that the draug is defeated, Sabrina Glevissig's terrible rain of fireballs has begun. You are possessed for a final time by a priest who must guide his unit to Henselt's position, to inform him of the terror that has overtaken the battlefield. Don't worry about this turning into an escort mission; all you really need to do is get yourself to Henselt to trigger the concluding barrage of cutscenes. You can't dodge-roll as the priest, so just try to move away if the ground before you becomes red.

The concluding cutscenes lead to Geralt recovering a significant portion of his memory, as he expected, so resolving this quest also advances **Returning Memories**. During the ensuing dialogue with Philippa Eilhart, feel free to say whatever you want.

Vergen Besieged

One more major battle sequence remains in this Chapter. Now that Henselt's army is coming, all of Vergen's merchants shut down. You can't get anything crafted, but you can brew formulas if necessary. You shouldn't need to make any particular preparations for the coming battle, so go directly to speak to Zoltan after you're done talking to Philippa. You may want to replace the bullvore trophy with the draug trophy, now that you have it, but otherwise your equipment should already be optimal for this version of Chapter 2.

Watch Zoltan command troops for a bit, and then talk to him. After this, you get your first task in the battle—using the hot oil valve to burn up some of the Kaedweni invaders. The hot oil valve you're responsible for is on the right side of the Mahakam Gate, on the upper level. To use it, press the interaction button repeatedly to fill up a meter. This sequence ends once you successfully do that. Meet up with Zoltan at the base of the Mahakam Gate. You receive 300 XP at this point and now need to retreat to the second gate.

At this point Dethmold summons a storm over the battlefield, which causes it to rain. This strengthens Quen while reducing the frequency of the incineration critical effect. Head up to the walls with Zoltan to begin defending them from Kaedweni who try to climb in with siege ladders. Use whatever your build's most effective remaining crowd control strategies are here. If you survive the first wave, you get 400 XP and get to brace to do the whole thing over again. Instant kills and group finishers can be hugely helpful for speeding this part of the quest along. You get another 400 XP for surviving the second wave.

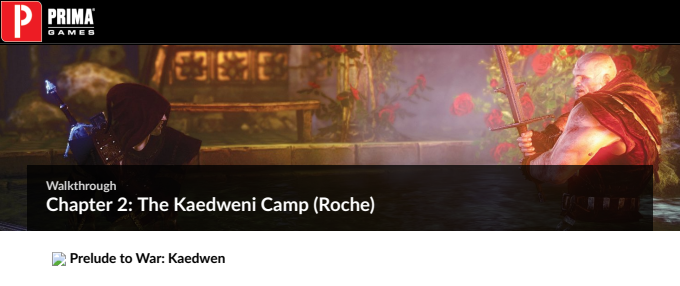
After you survive the second wave, Saskia says that there are tunnels beneath the town that may have been infiltrated by Henselt's troops. She wants you to go with her to clear them out. You can't really back out of this, so prepare to do some more precision-oriented fighting. When you enter the previously locked portion of the Tunnel of the Founders, you find four mercenaries there. Wipe them out. Follow Saskia to find another group. Beyond the door they guarded is a group of rotfiends, still lurking in the mines. Once you dispatch the rotfiends, continue following Saskia until Dethmold and another troop of Kaedwenis appear. You get 300 XP for making it this far and now have another battle to get through.

Let Saskia handle Dethmold's escort and focus on the sorcerer himself. You should know the drill for fighting sorcerers by now: use thrown daggers to interrupt spells when possible and to do damage from afar. Dethmold casts Quen on himself and shoots energy projectiles, but is otherwise not much different from fighting Vanhemar earlier in the chapter. Hit him with daggers after he teleports. Fortunately Dethmold is fragile, and one solid string of strong attack combos should take him below 50 percent HP. This triggers a cutscene where you learn Saskia's secret. You get 300 XP once this battle is over.

Follow Saskia back to the walls. During the cutscenes, if the trolls are still alive, they arrive to help with the final push to defeat Henselt's men. You get another 400 XP before you repulse the third wave. After you repulse the third wave, Iorveth arrives with the archers he promised. This turns the tables on Henselt, so now you have a chance to capture him. Get 200 XP for repulsing the third wave and then go to help Zoltan close the main gate. When you reach Iorveth's archer placement, you get 300 XP. Escort Zoltan to the gate lever and make sure no one attacks him. Once the gate is closed, Henselt surrenders, but this isn't the happy ending you might expect.

After the cutscenes, follow Philippa and Saskia with Iorveth at your side. Philippa teleports Saskia away, so you're reduced to searching Philippa's house instead. Go into the chamber where Cynthia used to sit and you should see a glittering book at the far end of the room. It's a book called...*Venoms and Poisons*? Oh, shit.

Follow Iorveth out of the house and speak with Dandelion and Zoltan outside. From there, you depart Vergen and set out for Loc Muinne and the events of Chapter 3. You should unlock the Alea Iacta Est achievement, too.



Walkthrough

Chapter 2: The Kaedweni Camp (Roche)

Prelude to War: Kaedwen

We begin the chapter in a cutscene where we see Henselt and his two mages going to a parley with Saskia the Dragonslayer and Prince Stennis of Vengerberg. You control Henselt in this sequence. As Henselt, the conversation options you select determine how this sequence plays out.

Your dialogue sequence here determines whether you fight Saskia the Dragonslayer one on one in a duel, or whether you fight her forces in a pitched battle. The initial negotiation with the Aedirnian nobles is only for flavor and does not affect this outcome. Once Saskia appears, your conversation choices begin to influence things.

If you say "Silence, Dethmold" after Saskia's cutting opening remark, you open up the option to simply duel her. Say "I'll fight" to initiate the duel. This battle is exceptionally easy if Riposte is available to counter Saskia's blows. If not, you can still do a basic block-counter pattern to defeat her easily. This is the simplest and quickest way to resolve this sequence.

If instead you say "My plans for you are altogether different," you trigger a mass melee battle that pits all of Henselt and Saskia's forces against each other. Síle is frankly more dangerous to you in this fight than any of Saskia's followers, as Síle's fire bolts incinerate you if you get hit by accident. You can attempt to pick off each of Saskia's followers one by one, but this process is very slow and can be a bit dangerous. Henselt can't dodge-roll and becomes vulnerable if surrounded. To end the mass melee quickly, go directly after Saskia.

If you say "Will you threaten me as well?" a short dialogue ensues, then the next branch of the dialogue simply presents the two options you didn't pick the first time. "Silence, Deathmold" unlocks the options outlined above.

If you say "You risk much, Saskia," you come to a new dialogue branch. Saying "I've heard enough" triggers the mass melee battle. If you say "I will hear you out," Saskia offers the duel. At this point you can accept by saying "I'll fight," or refuse by saying "My plans for you are altogether different."

When You're Not Geralt

Your brief stint fighting as Henselt in this part of Chapter 2 is one of many sequences this chapter where you control someone who is not Geralt and therefore does not have his full range of abilities. These sequences should be manageable regardless of build on Normal and Easy but may be frustrating on higher difficulties if your Geralt build is specialized for alchemy or magic. Those abilities do not carry over when you control a character who is not Geralt.

That said, it's worth noting that some abilities from the swordsmanship skill tree carry over when you control someone who isn't Geralt. Generally, you can't dodge-roll when you're controlling someone like Henselt, but passive abilities like Back Defense, Precision, and Violence are going to affect your performance in combat. Of the active abilities, the most notable one to carry over is Riposte. Keep this in mind if you start having serious problems completing a sequence where you aren't Geralt. Going into an earlier save and investing even just a couple of points in the swordsmanship skill tree can make a big difference.

After some cutscenes, Geralt and Roche arrive. Now you control Geralt and must help everyone battle a horde of Kaedweni knight wraiths. If you optimized your equipment last chapter, it really pays off here. You should be able to take out the wraiths rapidly with light attacks. Once you've defeated enough wraiths, two draugirs appear. Draugirs basically fight like knights with heavy shields, only their defense is even harder to get through.

Mage and alchemist Geralt builds need to stun or stagger a draugir to create an opening for doing damage. Mages want Aard or Yrden here, alchemists want Zerrikanian suns and Talgar winters. A swordsman build can try to sneak around to the draugir's back with dodge rolls, or try to simply tank through the draugir's attacks, using Quen to damage it while it's swinging its sword. Just like you, the draugir has to drop its guard before it attacks. In any case, keep Quen up during this battle. Just as in the mass melee, Síle tends to be more dangerous to you here than the actual enemies.

Note

Because of the way this sequence is structured, you won't have enough time to loot more than a handful of the kills you make in this sequence. You really want to loot the draugirs if you can, since you have very few opportunities to fight them later in the chapter. There are other ways to get their drops, but having more loot never hurts. The best way to grab some draugir loot is to quickly kill the first one, then try to loot its body while the NPCs keep the second occupied. Try sheathing your sword if you can't get the interaction prompt for picking up loot to appear. Note that looting the draugirs is particularly crucial for Dark mode players.

After you defeat the two draugirs, you get some more cutscenes that make it clear the wraiths are never going to stop spawning. For the next sequence, you need to stay within a cover of protective magic provided by Dethmold. It's very similar to the sequence last chapter where Triss protected you from arrows, but staying within the cover's field of protection is much easier. Occasionally Aedirnian knight wraiths rush you, but by the time they get to you, they have so little vitality that a single light attack probably dispatches them.

There should be two or three sequences where wraiths appear and trap Dethmold with beams of energy. The field of cover stops moving and Aedirnian and Kaedweni knight wraiths flood into it. To proceed, you need to pick off the wraiths holding back Dethmold. They respawn rather quickly, so avoid getting bogged down fighting the various knight wraiths. Usually freeing Dethmold requires killing at least four of them, most often around six. Keep Quen up, as Síle's very likely to end up firing fireballs at your back in a crowded, close-quarters fight like this one. Once you clear out all the wraiths, Dethmold can move again. Dethmold also eventually breaks free if you take too long slaying the various wraiths.

After the first of the battles against the entrapping wraiths, you pass by Prince Stennis's body lying beneath a tree. If you move quickly enough to loot him, you can get Stennis's sword, a unique (if mediocre) steel sword.

Eventually, Dethmold leads you to the Kaedweni Camp, pitched north of the Pontar. Once within its walls, follow Zyvik as he takes you on a tour of the major points of interest in the camp. You can try to hurry him, but if you do you're screwing yourself out of the Tourist achievement. Once the tour is done, Zyvik takes you to the entrance to the upper camp, where Henselt's tent is located.

Outside Henselt's tent, you encounter Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen again. You can mostly say what you wish during this conversation, which serves primarily to let you gather extra information about the storyline. An important thing to keep in mind, though, is that Axii does not work on Shilard. If you come to the branch of the dialogue where you have the chance to use special dialogue options, try the persuasion option instead.

After the discussion with Shilard, enter Henselt's tent and talk to him. You can say whatever you like here. No matter what you say, you end up tasked with finding a way to break the curse that has consumed the battlefield. Finishing the dialogue with Henselt resolves this quest, which is worth 1,000 XP.

At this point, there are plenty of active storyline quests that you can pursue. It's best to do all of the available side quests first, since the storyline quests tend to have a fairly dramatic effect on what you can and can't do. Right now you're free to do whatever you want, so begin by getting your bearings. In addition to the Kaedweni Camp, you can travel to Roche's Camp and the Camp Followers' Encampment nearby. The Nilfgaardian Camp is to the north, but you can only access it briefly as part of a particular quest. You travel to Roche's Camp for a few side quests but otherwise won't be using it regularly. All of the chapter's major shopkeepers are divided between the Kaedweni Camp and the Camp Followers' Encampment, so it's best to examine the two locations separately.

Note

You may automatically trigger events that initiate certain quests while exploring the camp. This is okay, as everything you can trigger is a side quest you can go back to once you've got your bearings. Just keep whatever cutscenes you've seen in mind later in this section of the walkthrough, when the side quest coverage begins.

Kaedweni Camp

Points of Interest

Canteen

The canteen is marked on your in-game mini-map as an inn, but many of the usual amenities of an inn are missing. In particular, you can't access your storage from the Kaedweni Camp's canteen and instead must head to the Camp Followers' Encampment to access storage. You visit the canteen mainly to get side quests off of the notice board that stands outside. You can also initiate the chapter's dice poker quest with a couple of fellows who play outside, as well as progress a few other side quests here by talking to NPCs.

Upper Kaedweni Camp

The upper Kaedweni Camp is where you can find nobles and the mercenaries that work directly for them. Major NPCs of note in this area include King Henselt, Síle de Tansarville, Dethmold, and Adam Pangratt. You need Pangratt in particular for this chapter's arm-wrestling quest line, and you must visit Dethmold and Henselt several times as part of the game's main story quests. Most of your interactions with Síle in this chapter are optional, but she can remove the **Hung Over** tattoo if you buy the right ingredients. A gate from the upper Kaedweni Camp leads to the Nilfgaardian Camp, but it usually remains shut. As you might expect, this part of the camp yields a lot of valuable random loot.

Roche's Camp

Just south of the Kaedweni Camp stands the area where the Blue Stripes have camped out. You need to go here for the chapter's fistfighting side quest and as part of the **Ave Henselt!** side quest. You can listen to some amusing dialogue from the Blue Stripes and have optional conversations with Roche and Ves here, too. Be sure to loot the area, as it's stuffed with more orens and random goods than you might expect.

Weapons Racks

The Kaedweni Camp is stuffed to the brim with useful loot, both random goods and some armor enhancements marked on your guide map. The weapons racks dotted throughout the camp are not exactly useful, but you can use them to obtain big piles of additional weapons that you can immediately turn around and sell. Each weapons rack you find in the Kaedweni Camp contains a cleaver, a bastard sword, a long sword, and a sword. That's 26 pounds of loot you can sell for a quick 29 orens. Note that any weapons rack you find in an indoor area is going to offer a random selection of weapons instead of the pre-set selection the ones outside offer.

The Right to Bear Arms

You might expect terrible consequences for running around an armed camp with your sword drawn, but, actually, no one cares. This is one of the few settled areas in the game where you can keep your sword drawn without guards pouring down on you. You can even run around the upper camp with your sword drawn and not have to worry about reprisals. Enjoy this while it lasts, though remember that running around with your sword drawn tends to make NPCs panic.

Merchants

Isidor

Item	Price	Item	Price
Harpy Trap	126	Phosphorescent Crystal	20
Conflagration	76	Leather	20
Grapeshot	101	Timber	7
Clawer	51	Twine	14
Diagram: Conflagration	251	Formula: Dancing Star	84
Diagram: Clawer	189	Formula: Dragon's Dream	111
Diagram: Talgar Winter	276	Formula: Devil's Puffball	77
Diagram: Rage	251	Formula: Flare	35
Diagram: Biter	226	Formula: Stenchbulb	63
Diagram: Well-Balanced Dagger	89	Formula: Zerrikanian Sun	97
Rotten Meat	7	Formula: Grapeshot	70
Bauble	14	Formula: Red Haze	84
Endrega Gland Extract	14	Biter	51

Isidor Kay is a dwarven sapper working for the Kaedweni forces as a mercenary. He doesn't care for the way the Kaedwenis treat dwarves, but the pay is good and opportunities are plentiful. Isidor is one of the two craftsmen you can work with in this chapter. He sells diagrams for all the major types of traps, monster lures, and formulas for bombs. Basically, anything you decide you need that you didn't get from Cedric in the last chapter, you can pick up from Isidor during Chapter 2. He operates roughly from noon to dusk.

Lasota

Item	Price	Item	Price
Leather	20	Reinforced Leather Enhancement	34
Cloth	20	Iron Ore	20
Robust Cloth	32	Silver Ore	45
Hardened Leather	26	Quilted Armor	781
Studded Leather	39	Kaedweni Leather Jacket	941
Blue Meteorite Ore	26	Kaedweni Sword	714
Diamond Dust	29	Diagram: Robust Kaedweni Sword	189
Red Meteorite Ore	26	Diagram: Endrega Hide Armor Reinforcements	201
Amethyst Dust	22	Diagram: Solid Cloth	251
Heavy Leather Trousers	153	Diagram: Hardened Leather	251
Rusty Well-Balanced Dagger	26	Diagram: Studded Leather	276
Well-Balanced Dagger	39	Diagram: Leather	176
Robust Well-Balanced Dagger	51	Diagram: Elemental Stone	214
Superb Well-Balanced Dagger	76	Diagram: Oil	126
Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	51	Diagram: Essence of Water	226
Robust Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	76	Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264
Superb Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	101	Diagram: Diamond Dust	314
Diagram: Draug Armor	1626	Diagram: Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	164
Mail Enhancement	158	Diagram: Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	339
Armor Enhancement	32	Diagram: Red Meteorite Silver Sword	151
Leather Enhancement	33	Diagram: Robust Yellow Meteorite Sword	264
Diagram: Amethyst Armor Enhancement	201	Diagram: Robust Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	626
Diagram: Diamond Armor Reinforcements	276	Diagram: Robust Red Meteorite Silver Sword	226
Studded Leather Reinforcement	64	Robust Leather Reinforcement	33
Fibre Enhancement	33		

Lasota is the camp armorer, a friendly enough fellow if also a man of few words. He sells a lot of components and diagrams for crafting various types of armor and swords. Most notably, he sells the diagram for the draug armor. If you've pored over the item listings in the back of the book, you've probably noticed that the draug armor is by far the strongest armor you can get in Chapter 2. The catch to this is that you cannot actually manufacture the draug armor in Chapter 2. The actions that allow you to obtain the armor's final component also trigger a quest that automatically shuts down all merchants in the Kaedweni Camp for the rest of the Chapter.

It's really Chapter 3 before you can use the draug armor. If you think that's the armor set you want to use for Chapter 3 and the end of the game, make sure you buy the diagram from Lasota before you resolve **The Eternal Battle**. The draug armor is actually the second-strongest set of armor in a standard (that is, non–Dark mode) game, though. If you want to go for the strongest set, the vran armor that becomes available later on in Chapter 3 as part of the quest **Mystic River**, then you may want to skip the draug armor entirely and save your money.

The best armor you can obtain before the Kaedweni Camp merchants close down is the Zireael's armor, which is given to you automatically at the chapter's midpoint as part of The Blood Curse. The second best is the armor of Ban Ard, which you can loot from an optional area that you can visit very early in the chapter. Either armor can comfortably get you to the end of Chapter 2, and your fully slotted kayran carapace armor or hunter's armor can see you through the chapter until then.

Lasota also sells the diagrams for the three robust meteorite swords, each of which offers a slightly different bonus determined by color. Each color type's bonus is particularly advantageous for certain types of build and play styles. If you wish to complete Chapter 2 using a robust meteorite sword, you should buy a diagram from Lasota and craft the sword you want as early as possible. While you can find an (arguably) slightly stronger silver sword as loot later in the chapter, it offers a much poorer critical effect than any of the robust meteorite swords. It's also worth noting that you may turn up all of the materials you need for crafting a robust meteorite sword simply by grabbing random loot in the Kaedweni Camp, which can make a robust meteorite sword a very cheap investment.

Meteorite Swords

This chapter introduces the red, blue, and yellow meteorite sword lines. These swords come in normal and robust versions in this chapter, with superb variations becoming available in Chapter 3. These swords tend to be very similar in terms of damage potential, but each color offers a distinct type of bonus. Red swords always offer a bonus to instant kill chance, blue swords always offer a damage bonus on signs, and yellow swords always offer a bonus to adrenaline generation. Which type of sword is best for you, especially in this chapter, depends on both your Geralt build and your play style.

Generally speaking, red meteorite swords are best for alchemist builds that have taken (or plan to take) the Berserker skill and swordsmanship builds that have taken (or plan to take) the Sudden Death skill. Blue meteorite swords are ideal for mage builds or any build that has invested in amping up the effectiveness of a particular sign (like Aard or Quen). Yellow meteorite swords are in theory useful to any build that gets an adrenaline ability, but in practical terms give more benefit to mages and swordsmen than they do to alchemists, who can generate lots of adrenaline passively just by having high toxicity.

It is possible to get into Chapter 2 with a Geralt build that is not yet specialized. If you want to use a robust meteorite sword this chapter instead of waiting to obtain the blood sword later on, you should take a few moments to make a plan for Geralt's development before you invest in one of them. You don't want to buy a robust red meteorite sword and then discover the hard way that your build just isn't very good at scoring instant kills.

Myron

Item	Price	Item	Price
Formula: Rook	173	Leather	20
Formula: Golden Oriole	63	Studded Leather	39
Petri's Philtre	26	Oil	14
Formula: Falka's Blood	139	Essence of Water	14
Formula: Brown Oil	125	Balisse	11
Formula: Cat	70	White Myrtle Petals	11
Formula: Samum	104	Celandine	10
Formula: Swallow	70	Wolfsbane	13
Formula: Gadwall	139	Scleroderm	14
Formula: Thunderbolt	125	Cortinarius	16
Formula: White Rafford's Decoction	97	Bryonia	24
Formula: Hanged Man's Venom	90	Mandrake Root	20
Formula: Arachnid Oil	104	Verbena	24
Formula: Lapwing	139	Twine	14
Formula: Tiara	84	Wolf's Aloe Leaves	126
Formula: Wolf	77	Green Mold	126
Formula: Whirl	207	Diagram: Solid Cloth	251
Formula: Brock	194	Diagram: Hardened Leather	251
Formula: Virga	104	Diagram: Studded Leather	276
Formula: Stammelford's Philtre	207	Diagram: Elemental Stone	214
Formula: Maribor Forest	152	Diagram: Oil	126
Formula: Tawny Owl	207	Diagram: Leather	176
Formula: Specter Oil	104	Diagram: Essence of Water	226
Formula: Necrophage Oil	125	Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264
Formula: Blade Oil	70	Diagram: Diamond Dust	314
Formula: Insectoid Oil	111	Essence of Death	189
Diamond Dust	29	Arachas Eyes	439
Amethyst Dust	22	Troll Tongue	439
Cloth	20		

Myron is the camp's apothecary, so he sells various potion and oil formulas, herbs, monster drops, and some basic diagrams. If you missed any potions you wanted in Chapter 1, chances are you can buy them from Myron now. In particular, he sells the formula for Gadwall, which you need as part of a quest later in the chapter. Myron also sells the green mold and wolf's aloe leaves that you need to remove the tattoo you got during **Hung Over**. If you decide you want to do that in this chapter, Síle de Tansarville can remove it for you once you have the right ingredients. Myron operates roughly from noon to dusk.

Relic Seller

Item	Price	Item	Price
Balisse	11	Mandrake Root	20
White Myrtle Petals	12	Verbena	24
Celandine	10	Diamond Dust	29
Wolfsbane	13	Amethyst Dust	22
Scleroderm	14	Cloth	20
Cortinarius	16	Leather	20
Bryonia	24		

The Relic Seller is just one step above being a trash merchant, as he sells nothing but minor herbs and crafting items you probably have stacks of already. His main role is in advancing a particular storyline quest for the game. He operates out of the canteen from noon to dusk, so seek him out there when you need him.

Camp Followers' Encampment

Points of Interest

Dandelion and Zoltan

Your bard pal Dandelion and your dwarf buddy Zoltan hang out at the Camp Followers' Encampment for the first half or so of the chapter. Sometimes Zoltan wanders over to the Blue Stripes camp, too. Toward the end of Chapter 2, they both move on. In the meantime, you can speak with Dandelion to have some interesting optional discussions about what's going on in the game's plot and a hint or two about how to trigger a romantic scene with Ves. You can't speak much to Zoltan until the midpoint of the chapter, when he participates in **The Blood Curse** and a few other associated quests.

The Brothel

The camp followers are led by a woman named Madame Carole. Speak with her if you'd like to spend some orens on one of her girls. All the usual caveats to spending orens on whores in this game apply here: The whores are expensive and offer you no in-game benefit for the money you've lost. You can also play dice with Madame Carole as part of this chapter's dice poker quest and visit the brothel to progress one of the chapter's main quests.

Merchants

Raymond

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

To access storage in this chapter, you must visit this sad-eyed dwarf. You can also have an amusing conversation with him about religion, though this is completely optional. Raymond does sell goods, but they're all trash. You mainly visit Raymond when you're out adventuring and need to quickly sell off some stuff that's not worth keeping or storing. This makes his location outside the Kaedweni Camp's walls fairly convenient later on in the chapter.

It is possible to pick up the Haggling attribute from Raymond if you missed it in Chapter 1. To get Haggling from him, pick the conversation choices that relate to lowering his prices, and be sure to quote the Good Book at him. If you do this correctly, then you have Haggling after the conversation ends. It is recommended to pick it up in Chapter 1, but if for some reason you didn't then go ahead and get it here. You can't obtain much money in this version of Chapter 2 and may end up having to purchase any runes you want for socketing your swords. Getting Haggling knocks down the prices of runes substantially.

Sambor

Item	Price	Item	Price
Diagram: Robust Cofasa	164	The Valley of the Flowers	64
Grapeshot	101	From the Annals of Mahakaman History	64
Diamond Dust	29	The Conjunction of the Spheres	64
The Horror of War: Rotfiends	64	The Dun Banner	64
Harpies: Daughters of the Gale	91	Diagram: Solid Cloth	251
The Arachas—A Study	145	Diagram: Hardened Leather	251
Draconids: A Textbook for Initiates of the Order of the Flaming Rose	32	Diagram: Studded Leather	276
Nekkers in the Mist	32	Diagram: Elemental Stone	214
Three Years Among the Endregas	64	Diagram: Oil	126
Wraiths: Fear and Trembling	95	Diagram: Leather	176
Bruxae: Eulogists of Death	105	Diagram: Essence of Water	226
How to Kill a Bullvore	126	Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264
Beings of the Element of Earth	189	Diagram: Diamond Dust	314
Of Trolls and Trolling	137	Balisse	11
Slaves of the Curse	137	White Myrtle Petals	12
The Legendary Accursed	189	Celandine	10
Gargoyles, Golems, Spiders—Maintenance and Repair	126	Wolfsbane	13
The Temerian Royal Dynasty	64	Scleroderm	14
Magic and Power	64	Cortinarius	16
The Feudal Society and Its Enemies	64	Bryonia	24
The Temerian Special Forces	64	Mandrake Root	20
The Grand Triple	64	Verbena	24
The Realms of the Nordlings	64		

Sambor is the chapter's bookseller and speaks only in proverbs due to a bet. He sells all of the monster books you might want for this chapter and also sells The Dun Banner, a book that can be useful for resolving a particular quest. Aside from his books, he doesn't sell a whole lot that's interesting—mostly basic diagrams, herbs, and an assortment of miscellany. He's also this chapter's hairstylist.

Mysterious Merchant

Item	Price	Item	Price
Diagram: Solid Cloth	176	Armor of Ban Ard	1582
Diagram: Hardened Leather	176	Robust Blue Meteorite Sword	935
Diagram: Studded Leather	194	Robust Yellow Meteorite Sword	694
Diagram: Elemental Stone	150	Poisoned Zerrikanian Saberra	617
Diagram: Oil	89	Sun Rune	264
Diagram: Leather	124	Ysgith Rune	351
Diagram: Essence of Water	159	Earth Rune	176
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	185	Moon Rune	264
Diagram: Diamond Dust	220	Fire Rune	351

At the rear of the encampment, leaning up against the old tower, you can find the Mysterious Merchant. In this chapter, he sells some fairly good (but not optimal) armor and swords, as well as some nicely discounted basic diagrams. The most important thing he carries this chapter, though, is runes. As you may notice from scanning the other shop lists, none of the other merchants in this chapter sell basic runes or rune-making diagrams. If you want to fully slot your swords with good runes, you are probably going to spend quite a bit of money on the Mysterious Merchant's inventory.

Conspiracy Theory

After you've gotten your bearings in the Kaedweni Camp, go back and have that talk Dethmold requested from you earlier. This conversation advances several quests, but for your purposes right now, it's mainly helpful because it advances the main quest, **Conspiracy Theory**. Make sure you say "What's with the coins?" to Dethmold before you finish the conversation. Everything else relates to a different quest line. If you want a fuller understanding of the story, be sure to ask Dethmold all of the optional questions. Your responses don't change anything.

Once you advance **Conspiracy Theory**, you can question many of the soldiers in the camp. You can speak to soldiers about the elements of this quest only once each. Most of these conversations are fairly pointless (if sometimes entertaining) and won't give you anything useful, but you can use this ability to complete some side quests that actually do give you insight into the origins and purposes of the square coins. We're going to do one right away.

Side Quest: In Cervisia Veritas

You have probably noticed the three drunks staggering around the camp, shouting their pal Odrin's name over and over again. While their concern is touching, listening to a screaming drunk gets old pretty quick. For your first good deed in the Kaedweni Camp, you're going to find their pal for them, so they can stop worrying about him and you can enjoy some peace and quiet while you go about your business.

First, go talk to each of the three drunks. You get to ask each of them one question. Which one you ask doesn't really matter, but it's most useful if you directly ask about Odrin and what happened to him. One way or another, you should find out that he staggered off drunk last night and nobody knows where he is, which is an inconvenience since they want to get back to drinking. So, go find Odrin. You get no clues to his location, so you end up having to stumble over him. His location is marked on your map. He's one of only two points of interest you can access through the camp's west wall. It makes sense that a drunk wouldn't get far.

After you find Odrin, help him up and then try to get him back into camp. There are two ways to get him past the guard successfully. You can bribe the guard at least 30 orens or simply say "He's my prisoner. I need to question him." The latter is completely free, which makes it a bit preferable. If you use the second dialogue option—"He's an important witness. He has to get in"—then you put yourself in a position of either having to bribe the guard or fail the quest. If you say "Report it whenever you need to," Odrin gets offended with you and storms off in a huff, forcing you to fail the quest. Saying "How much to get him in?" lets you know exactly how much the guard accepts as a bribe, though.

Once Odrin is inside the camp, you need to reunite him with his friends. Odrin can't walk on his own, so pick him up and slowly walk him toward his drunk friends stumbling around the center of camp. As you pass them, they recognize Odrin and fall in behind you, singing bawdy songs loudly. Shortly after you get all three, Odrin is probably going to start screaming about bats and fall from your grip. Just pick him back up and continue on from there. You want to get Odrin and his friends into the canteen.

Inside the canteen, a dialogue sequence begins. During this dialogue sequence, it is possible to fail the quest if you say the wrong thing. Absolutely do not say "I want to help you" or "Something's awry" if they come up in conversation. This causes Odrin's friends to believe you to be dangerous, so they won't drink with you.

If you say anything else, Odrin unexpectedly sobers up a little and gives you a lot of information about the conspirators and the square coins they use. He even gives Geralt a square coin one of the conspirators passed to him. Odrin also tells Geralt that he should give the coin to Whistling Wendy to open up the gate where the conspirators gather. If you do all this, you learn more about the conspiracy. After that, the quest ends. You get no XP reward for resolving this quest, but you do get a pleasant buzz.

You can go straight to Madame Carole's at this point, but hold off for now. With Odrin's loud friends calmed down, now is a good time to tackle some other side quests. You may also want to go back and re-examine the area where you found Odrin.

The Camp Cave

You may recall seeing what looked like the entrance to a cave behind Odrin. That's exactly what it is, and it's a cave you can explore. Go back to that area and drop down to enter the cave. The cave is infested with rotfiends, so if necessary bring some necrophage oil with you so you can tear through them quickly. They shouldn't be too dangerous if your equipment is the optimal set from the end of Chapter 1.

If you head to the right from the entrance, you can explore passages that lead to two major finds. One is a dead body carrying amazing loot: a steel plate enhancement, a set of Kaedweni leather armor, and a stack of superb well-balanced silver daggers. There's also a lot of random loot and ores stuffed into the chests and bags you find at the cave's dead ends.

The other major find is a massive monster called a bullvore. It can probably kill you in just a handful of hits, so prepare potions before you battle it. Fighting the bullvore isn't tricky—you can basically keep Quen up and whale away at it with strong attacks when it's not blocking. If you've got leveled-up Quen you can take it head on, while other builds may want to get behind it or try to find ways to stun it. Try not to run from it a lot, or it uses a potent poison spray attack. If you can defeat the bullvore, there's a chance its drops will include a bullvore trophy, which is amazingly powerful at this point in the game.

After looting the tunnel alcoves near the bullvore's territory, go back to the cave's entrance and then begin exploring to the left. You should find a great deal of random treasure, weapons racks, and rotfiends. Scan diligently with your medallion to eventually discover a circle of strength. Pause here to prepare for a battle. Apply potions that buff your build's basic attack and defense, assign Quen or Aard to your sign slot, and perhaps craft some bombs of an appropriate type. You're about to fight a golem.

The golem is a big slow creature, similar to a bullvore. It's a bit tougher, which is why most Geralt builds at this point in the game are going to want to have full potion buffs and maybe an oiled blade at their disposal when fighting it. You're in very tight quarters, so you can't do too much with traps. If you have maxed out Quen, you can just wade into it with blows. Otherwise, try to dodge-roll behind it or interrupt it with your own sword blows while attacking. Aard can be useful here to stun it and give you a chance to get some blows in. After you defeat the golem, there's a chance that it drops an elemental trophy, which is extremely useful to any build that uses signs regularly. Defeating this golem counts toward obtaining the David character attribute.

Loot the area the golem was protecting to find some truly amazing loot drops. The best of them is the armor of Ban Ard, which swordsman and alchemist builds may want to begin using right away. It's also worth noting that you can loot the second-best armor in this chapter here. The best armor you can acquire later in the chapter is only really significantly better for mage builds, and waiting for it forces you to make do with your Chapter 1 armor for quite a bit longer. Besides the armor, you can also find a stack of rare throwing daggers called poisoned harpy claws.

After you defeat the golem, scour the cave for the last treasures. Go all the way to the rear exits of the cave to make sure you find the corpse carrying a second stack of poisoned harpy claws. When you're done, head back to the Kaedweni Camp. The cave's rear exit puts you tantalizingly close to the Nilfgaardian Camp, but if you try to go there the entrance is blocked off. You'll just have to content yourself with your massive haul of treasure and monster drops.

Toxic Blood

If you want to pick up the Toxic Blood character attribute, now is a good time to do it. Even with resistances, you tend to get poisoned when a rotfiend or greater rotfiend explodes on you. If you get poisoned 15 times, you can pick up Toxic Blood and get a +30 percent chance to poison enemies when Geralt's toxicity is high from potion use. Alchemists can get a lot of mileage out of this attribute, especially when fighting humanoids.

It's generally best to try and get a rotfiend to explode on you only after you've whittled the group's numbers down. If you just stand in the middle of explosions while surrounded, the damage can pile up a bit more quickly than you can handle. It's a good idea to cast Quen quickly after being poisoned, instead of soaking up all the poison damage each time it's inflicted. You may need to exit the camp cave a few times and meditate to reset the rotfiend spawns to unlock Toxic Blood.

Side Quest: Poker Face: Kaedweni Camp

Begin by speaking to the two dice players in front of the canteen, Gondor and Fraglik. Speak to one of them to initiate the quest. After you've beaten the two of them, go find Zyvik wherever he is and challenge him. After he's beaten, head to the Camp Followers' Encampment and challenge Madame Carole. Once she's beaten, you can go challenge the local champion, Lasota.

You can take 200 orens for beating Lasota, or you can pick from one of three diagrams: leather, hardened leather (called tempered leather in dialogue), or studded leather. The dialogue makes it sound like you're getting armor, but no, it's just a diagram for the crafting material. Take the diagram for hardened leather or studded leather, as they both cost a lot more than 200 orens from merchants if you don't have Haggling.

Side Quest: Against the Blue Stripes

Go pay a visit to Roche at his camp. You should see some fistfighting going on at the rear of the encampment as Roche's men practice. Offer to challenge them. No money is wagered in this fistfighting contest, since it's all friendly sparring. After you defeat two of Roche's men, Roche himself appears to fight you in the third round. If you defeat him, you get a steel plate enhancement as a reward.

After you defeat Roche, some men from the Kaedweni Camp show up. One of them really wants to challenge Geralt. You can turn him down if you like, but accepting opens up a new side quest.

Side Quest: A Score to Settle

If you defeat Burton, the irate Kaedweni soldier, he leaves but swears this isn't over yet with you. He's also mentioned those square coins you've been investigating… For now, the quest is finished. Since you fought Burton, though, you have a chance to meet him again in Chapter 3 for a rematch.

Side Quest: Bring It On: Kaedweni Camp

Initiate this quest by speaking with Adam Pangratt in the upper Kaedweni Camp. After telling you an interesting story about why he cares so much about arm-wrestling, Pangratt says he'll accept your challenge if you can defeat his men, Martin and Randal, and also the camp's blacksmith, Magnus. You can get up to 40 orens and 25 XP each for defeating Martin and Randal, and up to 60 orens and 25 XP for defeating Magnus. They shouldn't be especially difficult opponents.

Now go challenge Pangratt. This is very similar to arm-wrestling Bartholomew Burgee in Chapter 1, but just a bit more challenging. As with Burgee, you can wager up to 100 orens on this match, for a payoff of up to 200 orens. So as in Chapter 1, you can arm-wrestle Pangratt repeatedly to quickly grind orens, though chances are you're not as strapped for cash now as you were back then. The first time you beat Pangratt, you clear the quest and get 50 XP.

Note

You may notice that you have a tendency to set yourself on fire whenever you speak with or arm-wrestle Pangratt, since he hangs out next to a campfire. Do not be alarmed. At this point in the game, conventional fire shouldn't do enough damage to be life-threatening. Also, being on fire won't interfere with your arm-wrestling.

The Butcher of Cidaris

You may have initiated the very beginning of this quest while trying to lug Odrin into the canteen. To start the quest, approach the pair of men arguing just outside the canteen's entrance. It becomes clear that it's an older man trying to talk his son out of doing something, his effort futile. After the argument, the kid goes to "practice" with his sword outside the canteen. Go inside and speak to the kid's father, Manfred.

You find out the kid's name is Sven and he's going to have to fight Lelande Avet, the "Butcher of Cidaris," to the death. Sven is barely 18 and is pretty much going to die if he fights Avet.

Geralt offers to help save Sven's life, in return for "help" from his father. Now go talk to Sven outside. He mouths off to you no matter what, but accepts your proposal that he duel alongside you against Avet and someone else. Now go find Avet in his tent. You can challenge him or just insult him, but either way he accepts your offer of a duel in pairs. Go speak to Sven again to initiate the fight in the arena.

The actual fight against Avet and his second, Edward "The Petal" Leintham, shouldn't be too difficult for you. Avet does much heavier damage than Leintham, but he's vulnerable to all sorts of witcher's tricks except Axii. You can render the fight hilarious by using Axii on Leintham and ganging up on Avet.

You don't get any major reward in the form of orens or items, but after you leave the arena Sven's father gives you information on the square coin conspiracy. It's exactly what happens if you finish **In Cervisia Veritas** successfully: you get a square coin and are told how to get Whistling Wendy to open up the gate to where the conspirators gather. You also get some more information about Vinson Traut, whom you should expect to fight once you're in the hideout.

Again, you could go and do this right away, but instead you should do a few other quests first. They can put your battle with Traut into a more interesting context.

Side Quest: Ave Henselt!

Immediately after you finish **The Butcher of Cidaris**, you are approached by Proximo, who organizes knightly tournaments for Henselt. Now that you've proven yourself in the arena, Henselt wants you to see you in combat against more skilled opponents. These battles aren't to the death, but instead you battle until your opponent yields (or you yield). It's worth noting that no matter who you fight during Henselt's tournament, at no point do you ever want to yield to the enemy. There is one fight where it may seem like you should yield, but this is not the case.

Proximo is named after the character of the same name from the film *The Gladiator*.

First, speak to Proximo to enter yourself in the tournament. You can only begin a round of the tournament between noon and dusk. You have a chance to save immediately after the first two rounds of the tournament, but not the third. The tournament battles are one-on-one fights against progressively more dangerous opponents. Generally, the first two opponents should pose no real threat to you, the third should be quasi-dangerous, and the fourth must be treated as a legitimately dangerous foe. In any of the fights you can get killed pretty quickly by standing around or making a serious mistake, though. Use tactics that play to your build's strengths and you should be fine. After each of the first three fights, you earn 50 XP.

Your first opponent is Gwydion, who's nothing special. Any swordsman build with Riposte should dismantle him easily, and Quen can shut down his ability to do damage. Rendag is similar, but damaging him is a more meticulous process since he carries a shield. Bombs and throwing daggers can come in handy here. Third opponent, Borin, uses the fighting style Letho and Dmitri favor. Getting caught in one of his multi-hit moves can be devastating. You can block his moves easily, but should counter with light attacks instead of slower strong attacks. Fighting him from a distance or focusing on stunning him can be very wise.

After you defeat Borin, Ves appears to be your fourth and final challenger. Ves is easier to damage than Rendag or Borin but does absolutely obscene damage when her blows connect. Getting stuck in one of her multi-hit combos can one-shot you very easily. Keep Quen up, fight from a distance if that's what your build is good at, or use Riposte and light attacks for counterblows. Whittle down Ves's vitality very carefully, waiting until you can strike without being punished.

If you choose to yield to Ves, you get no XP (since you lost) and you piss her off, since she says you just threw the fight. After she storms out, try to go talk to her at the Blue Stripes encampment. She gives you a tongue-lashing and tells you to go away. Enduring Ves's ire is worth another 50 XP and resolves the quest, if in a way that makes you look foolish.

If you defeat Ves, she's pleased that you took her seriously as an opponent and invites you to speak with her later. You get 250 orens for winning the tournament and 50 XP for beating her. You should also unlock the Gladiator achievement. When you go speak to Ves, you get 50 XP no matter what you say, and then automatically get another 50 XP for resolving the quest successfully.

If you play your cards right with Ves in conversation, you can trigger a love scene with her. Use the following responses as you move through the dialogue tree with her. Saying anything else amounts to offending her or refusing her. While this won't keep you from getting all of the quest's rewards, it will keep you from getting to sleep with Ves. Sleeping with her successfully unlocks the Heartbreaker achievement.

Correct Dialogue to Sleep with Ves

- That was a great duel.
- I also feel like using this opportunity.
- She's both brave and beautiful.
- I like that idea.

The Blood Curse

Lost Lambs

At some point when you stepped outside the Kaedweni Camp, probably after triggering **The Blood Curse** main quest, you likely triggered a cutscene with Zyvik. He complains of two men who've turned up missing and asks you to go look for them. If you haven't triggered this cutscene yet, go do so now. You need to move through the gullies to get there. When you reach the upper stretch of beach, you find two Kaedweni soldiers and the apparent site of Sabrina Glevissig's execution. First, talk to the soldiers. Tell them you'll help them, since otherwise the quest stalls at no real benefit to you. Have them wait until you examine the site of the execution, which is a necessary step for advancing **The Blood Curse**.

To do the examination, move toward the stone at the center of the circle until you get an interaction prompt. Select all of the examination options, one by one, so you can glean as much information as possible about what happened. Do not stop the examination until you've gone through every option. Be sure to take the square coin, the letter, and the rusty nail. Do not give the rusty nail to the soldiers, if one of them asks for it.

After you tell the soldiers "Let's go," lead them back to the area marked as the crossing on your guide map. Drowners immediately spawn on the beach, regardless of what time of day it is. The soldiers can defend themselves well enough, so just focus on taking out the drowners quickly. Use whatever standard tactics work best for your build. After you defeat the drowners and loot the bodies, lead the Kaedweni soldiers back to the crossing. Once they reach the crossing, the **Lost Lambs** quest automatically resolves and you get 100 XP.

Go talk to Zyvik at the Kaedweni Camp. To get him to give you a reward for completing **Lost Lambs**, say "I found those missing soldiers." Zyvik hands over 110 orens as your reward. After that, you may notice that there are a bunch of orange-highlighted dialogue options with Zyvik. These are all optional, but advance various quests and give you lots of additional information about the game's storyline. If you ask Zyvik about his service in the Dun Banner, he gives you the Beaver Cap item, which is useful while resolving the quest Death Symbolized.

Side Quest: Little Sisters

From a Bygone Era

You may have met Mavrick in the Kaedweni Camp, who's hated by the other troops. Go talk to him. He's usually not far from the camp's west exit. He claims to be haunted and, after a little prodding, tells you of a horrifying experience he had with specters on the beach. If at any point you insult Mavrick, it interrupts the dialogue. The quest doesn't end, but you have to talk to Mavrick again and make different choices to proceed. Eventually, ask Mavrick "Why did you go to the riverside?" and "Around what time did all this happen?" After that, you open up the option to say "I could get rid of that specter. For a price." This lets Geralt accept the quest, provided you say "I guess I'll have to." If you say "I can't," it works like insulting Mavrick. You can go back to get the quest later, but otherwise it doesn't advance.

Before you go far, step into the Camp Followers' Encampment and talk to Liva, whom Mavrick mentioned earlier. You can ask her some questions about what happened in the hut on the cliff three years ago. Ask every question, since there's no reason why you can't. When you're done speaking with Liva, head to the crossing point marked on the guide map and proceed to the lower stretch of beach. First, investigate the house that Liva mentioned. Carefully examine all four grave markers. In particular, examine the one marked as Malget's. It is inscribed with a down arrow, a diamond, and an up arrow series of sigils. Keep these in mind.

Head back to the hut. By now you have probably noticed that there are some conspicuous barrels sitting by the house's left-hand side (while facing the entrance). Approach them and you get an interaction prompt to use Aard to blow them up. This reveals a trap door that leads into the house's hidden cellar. Climb down.

Inside the cellar there's a bunch of random loot you can acquire and three curious podium-like altars, each with a candle atop it. Each altar is marked at the front with some sticks that, bound together, form a shape. There's a down arrow altar, an up arrow altar, and a diamond altar. If you approach the altars, you get an interaction prompt to light the candles with Igni. If you light the altars in the order specified on Malget's grave marker (down arrow, diamond, up arrow), you reveal a hidden room. If you light the candles in any other order, you just summon a wraith that tries to kill you.

Inside the hidden room you find a desk and a bookshelf. If you scan for loot, there won't be any, but you can pick up Malget's notes on the desk. This triggers the quest **From a Bygone Era**. There are two things you can do with the notes. You can sell them to Dethmold for 150 orens or keep them and have someone decipher them in Chapter 3. It is recommended that you keep them for Chapter 3, since progressing the quest there lets you obtain loot that's worth a lot more than 150 orens. For now, you've done all you can with **From a Bygone Era**. Climb out of the cellar and head down to the beach the cabin overlooks.

Head to the area marked "Little Sisters" on the guide map and meditate until midnight. When you come out of meditation, a wraith-like female spirit NPC should be waiting for you on the beach. Move toward her to initiate a dialogue sequence. The **Little Sisters** quest can have three outcomes depending on what you say and do during this dialogue and another one that can follow it.

The simplest outcome is to say "I kill wraiths" at the first dialogue branch. You can also get a similar outcome by saying "I'm a witcher," followed by "How to, Die." In this scenario, Geralt doesn't listen to what the female specter says and takes Mavrick's word that she's evil. The dialogue immediately ends and combat begins. You must defeat the female specter and her two "little sisters" quickly. While they have more vitality than the average wraith, they use the same attack patterns and aren't especially damaging. Use specter oil if you need it and basically fight them the way you would a pack of wraiths with your current build. You should defeat them without too much trouble. If you resolve things this way, return to the Kaedweni Camp and speak with Mavrick. He hands over 50 orens and you get 50 XP for resolving the quest.

A more complex outcome is to say "I'm a witcher" and then "I'll need to check that" at the second dialogue branch. In this case, Geralt is willing to believe that the spirit might not be lying. Go back to the Kaedweni Camp and speak with Mavrick. When the dialogue begins, say "The specters claim you're a murderer." Mavrick panics at this, insults you, and then runs away. Head back to the lower beach. Once there you find Mavrick's half-eaten, grisly remains and the female specter, who mocks you and then summons what she calls a demon to eat your soul.

The enemy, though called a demon, is in all respects basically just a bullvore, and you can fight it using the same tactics. It should be a bit easier to beat than the one in the camp cave, since you've got a wide-open area to fight it in and plenty of room for dodging. When you defeat the demon, it drops some necrophage lure parts, a bullvore trophy, and the diagram of the Mahakaman sihil. The quest fails in your journal and you get no additional XP or orens. The catch, though, is that the sword you can make using the diagram you just obtained is by far the best steel sword you can obtain in Chapter 2. Failing the **Little Sisters** quest and fighting this particular enemy is the only way to obtain this diagram, which is the only way to obtain the sword.

The third way to resolve the quest gives Mavrick a much happier outcome. For this resolution, say "I'm a witcher" and then "I'll need to check that first," when you first speak with the female specter. When you visit Mavrick in town, you say, "I need your help to drive the specters off!" You can mention having investigated the hut first, but Mavrick won't really tell you anything useful in response.

Mavrick agrees to help you and goes to wait for you in the clearing near Malget's house. Simply return to the lower beach and you can pick up Mavrick along the way. Take Mavrick to the beach, so you're with him when the female specter and her two little sisters materialize. They repeat their accusations. You can try to get more information about what really happened from Mavrick, by saying "I need to ask you something" followed by "Tell the truth." After those two options, you have to decide whether to support Mavrick ("I believe you") or say you think he's lying ("You need to answer for your deeds"). You can also side with Mavrick at the first dialogue branch by saying "Don't listen to them," or turn against Mavrick by saying "He's yours." If you turn against Mavrick here, there's a brief combat where you have to fight him with the three specters as allies. Once Mavrick is killed in battle, then the sequence with the bullvore happens.

If you want the happier ending, you must side with Mavrick. The female specter (whom you can recognize is a bruxa if you've read the book about them) is outraged that you've seen through her plot to devour Mavrick and turns on you with her two little sisters. Mavrick fights alongside you as an ally against them. As when you fight them alone, the female specters amount to being wraiths with high vitality and shouldn't be hard to beat using standard tactics. After you defeat them, you get 300 XP. Although Mavrick seems to hand you a money pouch in a cutscene, you get no orens for resolving this quest. Loot the bodies to get some wraith drops and, if you're lucky, maybe a good mutagen or two.

Mechanically, the most beneficial outcome to **Little Sisters** is whatever lets you make the Mahakaman sihil. Once it's made you can socket it with runes and then have a significant advantage in the chapter's remaining fights against humans. Of course, Mavrick really didn't kill his sisters, so to get this sword you basically have to let a demon eat an innocent man. If that doesn't sit well with you, there are some lesser steel swords you can make do with and you can resolve the quest with its happy 300 XP resolution instead.

Note

Something to keep in mind is that while you catch up in Chapter 3, you tend to earn less experience overall on Roche's version of Chapter 2 than in Iorveth's. You can offset this somewhat by getting Experienced in Chapter 1, but even if you did, chances to obtain extra XP in Roche's Chapter 2 are still quite valuable. While the Mahakaman sihil is useful, giving it up to get more XP by resolving the quest is not a bad decision in mechanical terms.

Side Quest: The Rotfiend Contract

The Path to Vision

Now you can wrap up the chapter's last major side quest and get started on part of the main quest line. These quests are simple and straightforward. First, go take the quest notice for **The Rotfiend Contract** off of the canteen's notice board if you haven't already. Just beyond the canteen, you may see or overhear a group of men speaking about a relic one of them purchased, a nail that supposedly protects against Scoia'tael arrows. If you have the rusty nail relic from Sabrina Glevissig's execution site, you can approach them and prove that the relic they're discussing is fake (because it looks too new). This counts toward helping the camp's soldiers, which in turn counts toward getting to question the Scoia'tael prisoner.

Next, step inside the canteen and speak with the Relic Seller again, if you haven't already. You should've already had the conversation with Zyvik that relates to this quest, too. Tell the Relic Seller you found footprints at the site of Sabrina Glevissig's execution, and make it very clear that you know the footprints are his. The Relic Seller agrees to answer whatever questions you ask and you should ask all of them.

With that taken care of, you need to acquire knowledge of rotfiends before setting out for the Kaedweni Camp. You can buy the book about rotfiends that Sambor sells or go check your character menu to see if you acquired knowledge of rotfiends while clearing out the camp cave earlier. It is also possible you have already obtained the rotfiend book as random loot at some earlier point in the game.

Once you have acquired rotfiend knowledge somehow, leave the camp and go looking for unburied corpses to burn. There are nine in the area around the Kaedweni Camp, which you encounter in three groups of three corpses each. Once you've burned them all, the quest is done. The corpse locations are all marked on the map. To burn a corpse, simply approach and interact with it. Once you've burned the corpses, the respawn rate of rotfiends in the area slows down a bit. Generally, the easiest way to do things is to start with the corpses farthest south, behind the Camp Followers' Encampment, which you can find alongside some Kaedweni soldiers. Once the southern corpses are dealt with, work your way north. You may end up fighting some nekkers while you burn the corpses along the creek bed. The rotfiends themselves should pose no real threat to you by this point in the game.

Hidden Arachas

After you burn the corpses near the wrecked wagon just outside the Kaedweni Camp's gates, head a bit to the east and investigate the gullies there. You may encounter nekkers along the way.

As you're poking around, you should come to a point where your medallion vibrates automatically. Nearby there's an area where you can drop down into a deep ravine. Pause here to meditate and drink some potions, including Mongoose. Oil your silver blade with insectoid oil.

When you drop into the ravine, you find that an arachas has made its lair there. This fight is quite dangerous, as it's impossible to flank the arachas in this terrain. You have to approach it head-on. When it starts blocking, you can only roll backwards. On the other hand, Yrden is quite effective here because the arachas has no way to evade your signs.

Once you defeat this arachas, you can loot the mage gloves from its lair. As the name suggests, this item is very useful for mage builds.

When you head to the northernmost set of corpses, you trigger a cutscene that advances **The Path to Vision**. You come upon some rotfiends attacking a group of Kaedweni soldiers. Get out your silver sword and help the Kaedwenis out. When you defeat the rotfiends, the Kaedwenis mention that they were going to see the Visionary but ran off to help fight the monsters. They give you 46 orens to pass on to him, along with the soldiers' note to the Visionary. Burn the corpses nearby. You could return to the Kaedweni Camp now to turn in **The Rotfiend Contract**, but you can cut back on backtracking by waiting. Instead, head on to the Visionary's cabin.

Caution

It is entirely possible for the rotfiends to kill the Kaedweni soldiers here before you can help them. This mainly happens if they get caught in the middle of a series of rotfiend detonations. If the Kaedwenis die, then you have to pick up the orens and the soldiers' note to the Visionary as loot. This doesn't break The Path to Vision, but it will change the dialogue after you meet the Visionary a bit. Once you reach the part where the Visionary asks for either a bribe or for you to join his religion, the quest proceeds normally.

When you get there, a flock of harpies fly in. The Visionary tells you to run over to the candles. While you can usually beat harpies very easily, listen to him this time. The harpies in this area can spawn infinitely if you trigger them correctly (see the "Infinite Harpies" sidebar), so you can come back to fight them whenever you like. For now, speak with the Visionary.

Infinite Harpies

Generally, if you want to fight a given group of enemies over and over again in this game, you need to meditate awhile so the group has time to respawn. The harpies outside the Visionary's hut are a unique exception you can take advantage of if you need to make some orens on the quick. This harpy group is designed to spawn again every time you leave the Visionary's house. If you want to amass a big pile of valuable harpy feathers to sell, then kill the harpies, run into the Visionary's house, and then run back out. The harpies should be back and ready to be killed all over again. If you don't encounter harpies for some reason, then just run in and out of the Visionary's house a few times to trigger the spawn. You can repeat this process until you have all of the harpy drops you want.

There are a few different ways to resolve this one. First, you can either give the Visionary the orens the soldiers gave you or keep them. The main thing this affects is how much money the Visionary asks for if you attempt to bribe him to get through the quest. If you keep the money the soldiers gave you, his max bid on a bribe is 381 orens. If you give him the money, his max bid is 592 orens. In short, it is to your advantage to keep the money.

Once you're done discussing the money, you ask the Visionary about Sabrina. He says he won't answer your questions unless you convert to his faith or give his church a "sizable donation." The sizable donation option is basically just bribing him for the information. You can do this, but it's not really recommended. Instead, say you'll join the Visionary's religion. This unlocks something that is pretty fun.

The Visionary gives you a Visionary's potion and says you have to pass an initiation ritual. You need to go to a shrine to Sabrina he's constructed in the woods, drink the potion, and perform a ritual. The ritual should give you a vision, which you should describe to the Visionary upon your return. Loot the Visionary's hut for the Visionary's notes (II and III), then set off toward the shrine area, as marked on the guide map. Be ready to encounter some endregas and an arachas along the way. This arachas won't be as difficult to beat as the first one, but it can easily kill you if you're not ready for it.

Note

While there are many different types of shells an arachas can spawn with during the game, you typically only get to see four of the variations in the course of a standard game. Something fun to do here is save your game just after you've entered the wooded area, then reload to repeat the encounter with the arachas. You should get to see many different shell types for the creature before they begin repeating.

Once you reach the shrine, meditate and drink the potion. The vision that unfolds before you is…

…huh.

You awaken after your trippy freakout atop a cliff over the shrine. Here you can pick up the last of the Visionary's notes (I) to complete your set. Climb down, then make a point of scanning the pool of water to the right of the shrine. You should find a unique steel sword called Arbitrator there that's probably not as good as what you're carrying now, but it's still interesting to have.

Head back to the Visionary's hut. When you talk to him, you should see a new dialogue option. This lets you tell the Visionary what you saw in your vision. You have some options to fib if you're too embarrassed to say what you really saw, but don't bother with them. The Visionary will know you're lying and the lies won't advance the quest. Just tell him the truth about the giant chicken and the mushrooms. It turns out this is exactly what he wanted to hear. After that, you can ask him questions about Sabrina. Just keep asking questions until you get the chance to ask him about what happened to the specter. The Visionary gives you an answer that points you back at the Relic Seller in the Kaedweni Camp.

Now it's time to go back to camp and turn in **The Rotfiend Contract**. Once you're at the camp, go speak to Proximo and report that you've finished by picking the dialogue option that references rotfiends. As payment for completing the quest you get a dwarven enhancement, a fire rune, 200 orens, and 100 XP. Resolving this also counts toward unlocking the Pest Control achievement. Next, go speak with the Relic Seller at the canteen. You should have a new question you can ask him as part of your dialogue options with him. His response resolves **The Path to Vision**. You get no XP for resolving **The Path to Vision**, but now you can advance **The Blood Curse** a bit more. Instead of getting right to work on that quest, though, we're going to tie off some loose ends and prepare for the chapter's endgame.

Conspiracy Theory

Courage Symbolized

First, let's go pay Vinson Traut a visit. Before you go see Madame Carole to offer a square coin, prepare yourself to take on a very tough human opponent and his five lackeys all at once. The area where you fight Traut is basically a single small room, with tables and pillars acting to further restrict movement. The pillars can make using bombs and throwing daggers annoying, but the tables create narrow areas that are ideal for luring enemies into traps. Generally, you don't have enough time to set out a ton of snares or blinders, so make traps that cause disabling effects and act as crowd control. Furies, conflagrations, Talgar winters, and clawers all have a place in this fight. Furies can be especially effective if you can lure the bulk of Traut's men onto one all at once.

Once you're geared up, go speak with Madame Carole. Initially the dialogue is fairly standard, but after you ask for a whore you have a chance to present Madame Carole with "square money." Take that option to initiate the sequence of events that's necessary for this quest. After that, ask for Whistling Wendy. None of the other women of the brothel are interested in your square coins.

Go into the brothel tent and speak with Wendy. Say "I want you to open the gates of paradise with your smile." She opens a trap door that leads into the old tower. Drop into it to find a small room with a single door leading out of it. Take advantage of this room to drink some potions before entering this battle and oil your blade with hanged man's venom.

Once you open the door, a dialogue sequence begins with Traut. No matter what you say, he attacks you immediately when the sequence is over, so be ready to dodge-roll away from him. If you try to immediately put up Quen or draw your sword, Traut successfully attacks you. He hits like a freight train and on higher difficulties this is a very brutal ambush. If you're going to pursue the trap strategy, then continue dodge-rolling into one of the choke points and quickly lay a trap. Wait for Traut's men to stumble into it. Keep rolling and laying traps until you're out of your trap stack or you've whittled away Traut's five helpers.

Mages can also make good use of Yrden in the choke points and Axii as a distraction if the trap method doesn't work out. You need some way of managing the crowd of enemies, though, as having six guys in a space this small makes it very difficult to put up any traditional offense without getting surrounded. Swordsmen really need Whirl (or even better, Combat Acumen) to do well here, even with Quen and the liberal use of traps. While battling things out with Traut once his men are all defeated, stick to Quen or use Aard to knock him down. If you can isolate Traut, he's much less dangerous and you can whittle his vitality down given time and patience.

Traut drops some amazing loot once you defeat him. The most useful for your game is Seltkirk's armor, which you can choose to equip. This is not recommended as you lose the armor later in the game as part of a quest, but it's nice to have options. Getting Seltkirk's armor automatically resolves the quest **Courage Symbolized**. You also get the conspirator's key you need to get out of the old tower, the otherwise unobtainable superior Kaedweni jackboots, the first-rate Temerian sword, and an anti-Henselt satirical pamphlet called A Hog Named Henselt. Geralt immediately recognizes the writing style as that of none other than his pal Dandelion. If you examine the rest of the old tower for loot, you're unlikely to find anything. You're done with this location for this chapter, so head out. The stairwell behind the door you unlock emerges from the old tower near the Mysterious Merchant.

Return to the Kaedweni Camp. Dandelion is hanging out near the camp's west gate, near the guards who were picking on Mavrick earlier. Talk to him about the pamphlet. Nothing you say here makes a difference, but it's necessary to advance the quest. Next, go speak with Dethmold to advance things along a little bit further. If you say the right things, you can get a 300-oren reward for defeating Traut and his men. Yeah, Dethmold's a jerk and nobody likes Henselt, but his pay is as good as anyone's. To get the reward, you must say the following things in your dialogue with Dethmold:

- I found the conspirators and Traut.
- Any reward on the conspirators' heads?
- One can never have too much coin…

The Assassins of Kings

Here's something else you want to get out of the way before you move on to messing with The Blood Curse. You know that captured Scoia'tael? If you asked to speak with him immediately after you arrived at the Kaedweni Camp, the guards probably refused you. Try again now that you've finished so many side quests. Now the guards think you're an okay guy and agree.

Caution

If you skip too many opportunities to help out soldiers in the camp, the guards won't give you permission to speak with the Scoia'tael.

Make sure you have subtitles turned on before you initiate the conversation with the captured Scoia'tael. Part of the conversation happens in Elder, and if you've turned subtitles off, you won't get a translation of what Geralt and the prisoner are saying. It's all stuff relevant to the game's main plot, so make sure you understand it.

The Scoia'tael also agrees to speak with you about the witchers you're looking for, though he insists on doing so in Elder. You get to ask a series of questions here, in whichever order you like. Ask them all to finish the sequence and progress this quest. You come back to it later in this chapter.

The Blood Curse

Two conversations are required to advance this quest. The first is with the Relic Seller, who now has a dialogue option that directly references Yahon's spear. When you ask about it, the Relic Seller refuses to give you any information unless you pay him. This opens up a series of dialogue branches that don't quite work the way you might expect. All of the special options put in an appearance, so you can use Axii, persuasion, or intimidation successfully to get the information you want for free. If you agree to simply pay the Relic Seller, though, no money changes hands. This also leads to you effectively getting the information for free. If you try to get the Relic Seller to lower his price using the "too much" dialogue option, this opens a bribery interface that is the only way to actually spend orens on this case. His maximum bribe is usually a randomized number that's a little over 100 orens, but with so many free options you really shouldn't use this one. Once you get the Relic Seller to tell you his story, it becomes apparent that the spear you need is currently on the other side of the mist, in Vergen.

Go talk to Dethmold again. This time, you want to pick two of the three options highlighted in orange. The top one is the option that lets you sell Malget's notes to him, if you want to do that. Remember that doing so prevents you from finishing **From a Bygone Era**'s activities in Chapter 3 and is not recommended.

Instead, say the second and third options in orange: "I could use some magic dust" and "I need to cross to the other side for the spear." These two sets of dialogue advance this quest and net you quest items, including Dethmold's grimoire, the magical powder, an emissary's flag, and Síle de Tansarville's protective amulet. You also get a new and very useful piece of equipment, Zireael's armor, which is probably the best overall armor in the chapter for mages or any other build that makes regular use of signs. Remember that bonuses to sign intensity also strengthen Quen, effectively giving you more defense. Finally, advancing this quest to the point where you can actually cross the cursed battlefield is worth about 2,000 XP.

After the dialogue with Dethmold, exit his tent and return to the lower part of the camp. Along the way you run into an extremely depressed Zoltan, who wants to cross the mist with you and enlist with the dwarven forces at Vergen. One way or another, you end up agreeing to let him go with you. Follow Zoltan to the entrance to the cursed battlefield, but first conclude your business at the Kaedweni Camp. You won't have access to storage in Vergen, so drop off anything heavy you don't want to lug around. Anything you want crafted to use on the other side you should make now, since you won't be able to access craftsmen on that side. Given that, you should also leave any crafting materials with significant weight behind in storage. Basically, take with you only your equipment and enough alchemical ingredients to make potions.

Crossing the cursed battlefield is a simple matter of finding your way from your starting point at the Kaedweni Camp side of the map to the exit that leads to Vergen. As you can see on the map, the correct exit to Vergen isn't quite where you think it is. If you go directly across the map to what looks like the city's gates, you reach a dead end. The area you want to get to, though, is just to your left if you are facing the dead end. You should make the crossing with no trouble provided you don't get lost and you don't try to fight the wraiths. The wraiths spawn infinitely, and if you take a swing at one, suddenly droves of them are spawning to attack you. Instead, just run past all the wraiths and get to the exit as quickly as possible.

When you emerge on the Vergen side of the map, head forward and take a left at the campfire. You run into Scoia'tael, but instead of an attack a cutscene triggers when you meet Yarpen Zigrin. Zoltan enlists and promises to meet you in the tunnels beneath Vergen to hand you Vandergrift's sword, which would resolve **Hatred Symbolized**. You get the Vergen key, which you can use to enter the tunnels. You can also head out into the woods to finish **Death Symbolized**, but first take a moment to get your bearings.

Vergen

You're only in this area for a short time and you're only allowed to explore a small portion of the city, mainly what lies outside the main walls. That's going to be the Rhundurin Square area, the Human Enclave, and the Old Gate. Explore each area thoroughly for loot, though don't be surprised if you end up having to sell most of it off. Still, you can check around the Human Enclave to pick up an Elaine Bleidd from a chest and usually some books from one of the two residences you can enter.

Points of Interest

Spark

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Spark is the only merchant you can access when visiting Vergen on this route, and she's basically a trash merchant. She doesn't sell anything you want. Her main use is in selling off loot that's put you over the encumbrance limit while you're adventuring. This is quite useful, since you've got to pick up a ton of loot while you're active in this area and you have no access to storage. If you lightened your load sufficiently before you crossed the mist, you shouldn't end up in a position where you are constantly having to backtrack to Spark's to sell things off.

Dwarven Weapons Racks

Even though you can't explore but a small slice of Vergen, you can get a surprisingly large amount of loot by exploring. Most of it you want to sell, since some are easier to carry than crafting materials. You can access quite a few weapons racks in the areas of Vergen you can reach, which work similarly to their Kaedweni counterparts. The selection of weapons you get from them is different, though. Each weapons rack you find in Vergen contains a dwarven hammer, a hammer, an elven messer, an elven sword, a small blackjack, a dwarven axe, an axe, and a hatchet. That's 38 pounds of loot you can sell for a quick 54 orens.

Hatred Symbolized

Let's start with this quest, which calls for you to meet up with Zoltan in the tunnels beneath Vergen to get Vandergrift's sword. You need to get into the Tunnel of the Founders area marked on the guide map, via a roundabout path. Basically, head out the Mahakam Gate, take a left at the campfire just beyond the burned village, and proceed until you reach what looks like some sort of dwarven idol to your right. At that point, take a very hard left up a path that doesn't look like it exists. Look for a path to your right that you can follow by either the guide map or the minimap. It takes you up a small hill surrounded by high cliffs, where you can find two wooden doors. The one that you can open leads into the Vergen tunnels.

This is one of the most confusing dungeon-like areas in the game. It is extremely dark inside. If you're having difficulties navigating, try drinking a Cat potion. The dotted areas you see on the guide map and in-game mini-map represent tunnels that run directly beneath or above the tunnels marked in solid lines. This area is truly massive and you gain surprisingly little loot from exploring it thoroughly. Many dead-end areas are simply empty and there's very little random loot.

The main enemies you face in the tunnels are various types of necrophages: nekkers, rotfiends, and a bullvore if you explore deeply enough into the tunnels. It's worth noting that the nekkers and rotfiends are hostile to each other and fight if they spawn in similar areas. In general, these are all monsters you've fought before, so the only danger to you will be because of the relatively close quarters of the tunnels. Just make the combat preparations appropriate to your build and you shouldn't have any issues fighting your way through the tunnels.

Your first task in the tunnels should be finding Zoltan and Saskia. To do this, proceed down the tunnel from the entrance. Activate the circle of strength when you see it, and then when you reach the chamber at the end of the tunnel, take a very hard left. Follow this tunnel until it forks, then take a right. You're essentially taking a circular route that lets you emerge on an upper chamber. You may see a doorway ahead of you, but you can't pass through until you find a key to unlock it. Instead, take another hard right and follow the narrow passage. When it forks, enter the broad passage that leads off to your left. Ignore the passages that branch off to the right and keep going until you reach a very large chamber where a bit of natural light filters in.

This chamber is patrolled by what we call the "unusual bullvore," because it is a seemingly normal bullvore that can yield really unusual drops. When you kill it, you may get a dragon claw and a draugir armor fragment in addition to any bullvore drops you get, like the bullvore brain. Since relatively few draugirs can be fought on Roche's route, this bullvore can be very helpful for picking up these items. This bullvore is of particular interest to Dark mode players, who really need some draugir drops for completing the Oathbreaker's set in Chapter 2.

Once the unusual bullvore is defeated, loot the body that contains the catacombs key. Hold onto it so you can explore beyond the locked door on your way out of the caves. Exit the chamber to the north and you emerge into a smaller chamber. You should find Saskia and Zoltan waiting for you at the end of it. Ignore the passage that branches off to the right and head toward them. After you finish the cutscenes with Zoltan and Saskia, which should automatically resolve the quest **Hatred Symbolized**, you can finish exploring the immediate area and then head back to the locked door. Opening it reveals a short passageway leading to a chest containing the Temerian leather gallgaskins.

Now there's one last area of the Vergen tunnels you want to explore. Head back to the fork where you went down the broad tunnel to your left previously. This time, head down the long, long, narrow passage that leads off to your right. At its end, you should emerge into a chamber where long passages lead off to your right and left. Go right. You're approaching an area patrolled by some rotfiends and a bullvore. The rotfiends aren't dangerous by themselves, but they can be a real annoyance if you end up fighting them at the same time as the bullvore. Maneuverability is key here. If you can get past the bullvore and its rotfiend escort, you should find the blood sword waiting in a chest beyond. This is the best silver sword you can obtain in this chapter in terms of pure damage, and its chances of inflicting bleeding are insanely high. It can be quite useful if slotted with the right runes, though you'll find that many types of monsters resist its bleeding critical effect. Once you have the blood sword, you've pulled all of the loot out of the tunnels that's worth your time. You can explore some more if you want, or just head back to Vergen and start looking for Skalen Burdon.

The Spear of Destiny

This quest is extremely simple. Simply go find Skalen Burdon and challenge him to a game of dice poker. Once you beat him, he hands over the head to Yahon's spear happily. Once you have the spear's head in hand, **The Spear of Destiny** automatically resolves. You get no XP for resolving it, but there is a way to get extra loot out of this quest. Skalen offers to wager another unique item if you're willing to rematch him. If you beat him a second time, you can obtain a unique steel sword called Princess Xenthia's sword. It has nice damage stats but only one rune slot, which makes it a bit underpowered at this point in the game. If you beat Skalen a third time, you get the Dun Banner cloak, a quest item that comes in handy for **Death Symbolized**.

This quest is named after the spear that was thrust into Jesus' side during the crucifixion in Christian folklore. You may notice many other parallels in the situation surrounding Sabrina Glevissig to the Passion as it is portrayed in popular culture.

Side Quest: A Sackful of Fluff

Head past the area where you'd usually take a left to reach the Tunnel of the Founders area. This time, go straight past the dwarven idol nearby. You should instead find yourself at the Old Quarry, where a small cabin stands to your right. The cabin belongs to a fellow named Elthon, who offers Geralt work as he passes by. He says he knows a collector in Vengerberg who pays well for harpy feathers. He begins by asking you to bring him 12 if you agree to the quest (which you should). You may already have 12 harpy feathers on hand. Elthon pays three orens per feather for the first 12, which is considerably below the usual nine orens you'd get for selling harpy feathers. Sell them anyway, since what you're really trying to get out of this quest is a unique item rather than orens. Try to argue up the price as high as you can when you have a chance.

After you give him 12, he asks for 40 more feathers. If you don't already have the feathers on hand, go kill harpies for a while down in the quarry or in the area to the north of the pond. Remember that the harpies respawn roughly once every 12 hours. When you give Elthon the 40 feathers, how much you're paid depends on how you argued earlier. The highest possible price is around 20 orens per feather, which is much higher than their market value. If you humor Elthon's next request by saying "Let me hear it," you get asked to bring 8 more. Elthon gives you 100 orens for the last batch of feathers. Go do something else for a while—maybe kill a few more harpies.

Note

While hunting harpies in the Old Quarry, you pass by some stones marked with runes. At the quarry's bottom, you come to a locked door and locked chest. All of these features of the quarry relate to quests that can only be triggered if you ally with Iorveth. There's nothing you can do with these while visiting on Roche's route, so don't worry about them.

Come back after some time has passed if you want to see why Elthon really wanted all of those feathers. It can be a good idea to go complete your next quest, **Death Symbolized**, then come back to speak with Elthon. You can also meditate for a day or two. Engage in some small talk with Elthon when you visit him. After the conversation finishes, **A Sackful of Fluff** resolves. You don't get any XP for finishing this quest, but you do get Elthon's trophy. While Elthon's trophy is not super-good, you can wear it during major story cutscenes to transform The Witcher 2 into a delightful surrealist comedy.

Elthon is named in homage to flamboyant pop singer Elton John, who was famous for wearing brightly colored feather boas.

Side Quest: Death Symbolized

Prepare yourself for an expedition into the forest, then exit town through the Old Gate. It's labeled on the map of Vergen. Just head up the stairs near Skalen Burdon's location, through the slum-like area, and then through the tunnel at the rear of the Vergen slums. Once you're out of the tunnel and into the wilderness, you come to a pool in a creek that you must cross. After you cross the creek, you're very likely to run into a pack of four or so harpies prowling the area. This encounter respawns, so you can end up fighting them about once a day. In the same area, you're likely to run afoul of a group of six or so bandits. Usually two of them have crossbows and can be quite dangerous if you don't have both levels of Arrow Redirection. If you do, then just deflect arrows until they die and you get closer to unlocking the Batter attribute. The other bandits try to rush you while under cover of the crossbow fire, but you can easily manage these crowds by using Axii on somebody or throwing a dancing star.

A bit farther on the way toward the catacombs, you sometimes run afoul of a group of nekkers near a small pond. Sometimes the nekkers are all steaming heaps by the time you get here, because they got into a fight with the bandits and lost. Search the area around the pond very carefully to find a corpse that carries some random loot. Once you find this, you aren't far from the entrance to the Dwarven Catacombs.

Once you're inside the catacombs, move forward. An obvious false wall is in front of you, so blast it over with Aard. This opens up a crypt. Be ready to be attacked by a group of wraiths when you step inside. Just as in **The Claws of Madness**, the close quarters make the wraiths more dangerous than they would be normally. Alchemist builds shouldn't hesitate to use traps and bombs to get the group under control, while mages can make good use of Axii. Quen is essential for swordsman builds here; it's very difficult to get through these battles without getting surrounded.

You can examine the corpses in the crypt by approaching them and pressing the interaction button to uncover them. Doing this sometimes summons a wraith. Many corpses yield nothing interesting when examined, but a few reveal some random loot and orens.

Continue exploring the catacombs. The next two false walls you can blast away reveal nothing useful, but the third one opens up another large crypt chamber. Be sure to pick up the Wild Hunt investigator's notes from the corpse on your left. Follow this chamber as it winds in a U-shape around to another false wall. Blast this down and head straight across the bridge.

Continue exploring and open up the final crypt in the catacombs by blasting down the false wall. This reveals the ghost of Ekhart Hennessy, color bearer of the Dun Banner. In death, he's become the guardian of the Dun Banner itself, so Geralt can't obtain it unless he deals with the ghost somehow. There are two ways to do this.

The most direct and easy way is to slay Ekhart Hennessy's wraith. He is an incredibly weak opponent that swordsman builds can dispatch with little more than a chain of strong attacks. Alchemist and mage builds may need to prep a little with potion buffs or signs, but they shouldn't have any harder of a time defeating him. After Hennessy is slain, you can simply loot the Dun Banner itself, called the standard, from Hennessy's sarcophagus.

There's also a sneaky but slightly more challenging way to resolve the quest. You can attempt to convince Hennessy that you're a surviving member of the Dun Banner who needs the corps' standard for a worthy cause. If you can do this successfully, Hennessy gives you the standard and an extra item, the sword of the Dun Banner, willingly. To deceive Hennessy, you must answer all of his questions about the Battle of Brenna correctly. If you remember the details of your conversations with Zyvik and the other veterans of that conflict in the Kaedweni Camp, this should be no trouble. It can also help to read that copy of The Dun Banner you looted earlier.

In case your memory fails you, the answers Hennessy wants at each branch of the conversation with him on this route are listed here. Note that you can do a version of this quest on Iorveth's route, and on that route one of the answers is slightly different.

Answer List

- I served in the Banner.
- You got it wrong.
- Menno Coehoorn.
- Coehoorn is dead.
- Vandergrift and Seltkirk.
- I was led out by a priest.

Note that if you answer one of Hennessy's questions incorrectly, he sees through your deception and attacks you—unless you're carrying the Dun Banner cloak you won from Skalen earlier. You also could've obtained the beaver cap by talking to Zyvik earlier in the game. In these cases, he is convinced by the physical evidence you bear and excuses your error as a lapse of memory. This only excuses two incorrect answers, though, so three errors and Hennessy will attack you as usual.

Hennessy also attacks you if you give him a violent response like "Die!" It's still possible to complete the quest by killing him if he attacks you, it just won't be possible to get the sword of the Dun Banner. If you passed on the Mahakaman sihil earlier, you really want to make sure you get the sword of the Dun Banner here, so be careful when answering the questions. Regardless of how you resolve **Death Symbolized**, there are no XP rewards involved.

Here's another Lord of the Rings reference: Hennessy's wraith refers to the sword of the Dun Banner as the "sword of Colonel Gondor." In the mythology of LotR, Gondor was the greatest kingdom of men at the end of the Third Age.

If you have the beaver cap, leave it on the sarcophagus when prompted. Loot the other bodies in Hennessy's room of the catacombs, then head back to town.

Where Is Triss Merigold?

This should conclude all of the business you can conduct in Vergen, so prepare to cross back through the mists now. Use the same approach as when making your first crossing and you should be fine. In this case, simply moving toward the gates of the Kaedweni Camp in the distance gets you where you need to go. You automatically trigger a cutscene involving Roche's men when you emerge from the other side of the fog. Roche claims that Nilfgaardians attacked while you were gone. You go with him to storm the Nilfgaardian Camp.

Unfortunately, you're too late. When you pass through the gates, the Nilfgaardians are already sailing away. All this really establishes is that the Nilfgaardians probably have Triss and have probably taken her to Loc Muinne, where you'll spend Chapter 3. You'll pursue in due time, but for now you've got business to wrap up. Before you leave the Nilfgaardian Camp, make sure you loot Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's tent. You should find some minor equipment, the book Song of the Hunt, and Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's first letter to the emperor inside.

Before you move on to the next quest, speak with Síle de Tansarville about the Wild Hunt. Mention the Wild Hunt investigator's notes you picked up while resolving **Death Symbolized**. She refuses to speak about it but directs you to Myron, who has an interest in the topic. So speak with him to find out a lot of information about the Hunt that you otherwise don't run across in the game, but which can give you a much greater understanding of what's going on with the **Returning Memories** quest. You can also discuss the Song of the Hunt book you pick up in Shilard's tent with him. This sets up some optional conversations you can have about the Wild Hunt with the various town square merchants in Chapter 3. Do this now because after you resolve **The Blood Curse**, Síle leaves the camp and the sequence of events can no longer be initiated. So if you want Síle to remove your tattoo, you should knock that out now, too.

The Blood Curse

You automatically initiate the final stage of this quest by speaking with King Henselt after you're back on the Kaedweni side of the mist. You teleport immediately to the site of Sabrina Glevissig's execution. Head up the ridge that overlooks the stone pedestal in the center of the clearing, then speak to Henselt. You enter a part of the game where a list of locations displays onscreen. You need to direct Henselt to move from place to place, sprinkling magic powder behind him.

You want to send him to a series of points such that the magic powder draws the simplified magic rune you see when you open Dethmold's grimoire. The game gives you some tools for figuring this out yourself, but if you just want an easy way to get through this sequence, send Henselt to the various locations from the list in the order given here. If you want to figure things out for yourself, note that he begins near the pole circle.

- Petrified bread
- Black candles
- Goat skull
- Scorched tree
- Raven corpse
- Stone bowl
- Pole circle

If you make any incorrect selections while you do this sequence, you have to start over from the beginning. There's another way to draw the rune correctly, but exactly how you do it doesn't matter so long as you get the shape right. Once the rune is complete, head down the slope and approach an area to your left. You should get an interaction prompt to set the magic powder aflame with Igni.

Next begins a sequence that should be very reminiscent of Melitele's Heart, if you did that quest in Chapter 1. Wraiths begin to spawn around the circle and your job is to keep them from attacking King Henselt. The wraiths spawn infinitely until the sequence ends. If you successfully keep the wraiths from getting too near Henselt, he stabs Sabrina and you announce your success. If you fail at doing this, then the ritual fails dramatically, Geralt dies, and you must reload your last save to try again. The wraiths themselves are nothing special, you just want to focus on keeping them under control. Specter oil can help a lot, as can a good array of potions.

If you successfully complete the ritual, then the quest resolves. You gain 2,250 XP and unlock the Exorcist character attribute. Go see King Henselt in his tent to trigger a cutscene and the next quest you need to focus on awhile.

The Assassins of Kings

Returning Memories

Now you find yourself battling two would-be assassins outside of King Henselt's tent. You don't need to defeat both of them completely; getting either one's vitality low enough triggers a cutscene that ends the battle. Since you're dealing with two enemies, bombs can be very useful in getting them both at once. You can also make good use of Axii and Yrden to stun one of the assassins so you can begin an attack. Hanged man's venom can help you pile on damage more quickly. Potions can also be very helpful—just make sure you apply them before you talk to King Henselt. While the potion meters will tick down during the cutscene, the cutscenes aren't very long and you should be able to keep potions up during the entire fight. Finishing the battle is worth 500 XP and unlocks the Swordsman character attribute.

After the battle ends, you're sent to talk to Dethmold. He's not in his usual location at the tent—instead he's in the tent where Myron usually hangs out. The corpse of the assassin you managed to defeat is laid out on the table. Talk to Dethmold and he explains the ritual you're going to use to find more information about the kingslayers. Before you initiate the ritual, you should craft and drink a Gadwall potion. The game really won't let you begin this sequence without drinking a Gadwall. If you need to obtain the Gadwall formula, remember that Myron sells it.

The ritual projects your mind into that of the dead assassin, Auckes, in a sequence where you have to carefully retrace his steps leading up to the murder. You only need to relive enough of Auckes's memory to find out where the kingslayers' hideout is, but it is possible to retrace Auckes's steps all the way up to the beginning of his battle with Geralt.

In the first part of the sequence, Auckes and Serrit converse with each other while battling harpies in a ravine. They come to the entrance of a cave, which leads to the most finicky part of the sequence. Carefully follow Serrit through a narrow passageway littered with snares. Save just before you start. If you accidentally trip any of the snares, the ritual fails and you must start over from the beginning. It's much quicker to just reload from a save taken right before you begin the snares. The easiest way to evade the snares is to point the camera at the ground, so you can see the snares clearly, and to move very slowly between them. Once you're clear of the snares, follow Serrit to trigger a cutscene with Letho.

After the cutscene with Letho you can trigger an optional portion of this sequence. It begins with a scene where Auckes infiltrates the Kaedweni Camp. In this sequence, wait until the guards finish their conversation and split up. One heads away, while the other you should follow. When he pauses with his back to you, creep up behind him and kill him using the interaction button. From this you go immediately to a short sequence where Serrit and Auckes walk briefly through the camp cave. Finally, you fight off Henselt's guard outside his tent. The sequence ends when you confront Geralt, who will use the abilities you used when you fought the two assassins earlier. At this point, you battle Geralt until he kills you or until you've reduced Geralt's hit points to about 60 percent. At this point the vision automatically ends. If you successfully make it to Geralt in Auckes's memories, though, you unlock the Necromancer achievement.

When you've either done something in the sequence incorrectly after getting to the Letho cutscene or gotten killed by Geralt, this sequence is over. You get to discuss what you saw with Dethmold and end up telling him that you know where the kingslayers are hiding. Your next goal in this quest is to go find the cave Letho was hiding in during Auckes's final memories, where you're pretty sure Serrit awaits.

To get to the kingslayers' hideout, cross at the river as if you were going to visit Malget's house, but take a left instead of the usual right. You quickly come to an entrance to the cursed battlefield. Avoid it and instead turn right. This takes you into the ravine where Serrit and Auckes fought harpies earlier. You may actually find the drops from that battle waiting for you on the ground. Defeat the harpies and the group of human bandits you come across at the end of the ravine. The entrance to the cave is pretty difficult to miss, since it's at the end of the ravine. Be ready to fight a handful of imposing enemies once you're in the cave.

You face your first gargoyle once you're inside. Gargoyles are something of a cross between a golem and a rotfiend, a small stone creature that explodes in a rain of fire and shrapnel when you defeat it. Stat-wise it's nothing special and you can probably approach fighting it the way you'd approach a greater rotfiend. You get to fight it as a solitary creature, which makes it easy to manage for mages and swordsmen. You fight one in the immediate area, then another later on in the cave. You will come to the area of snares from Auckes's memories. Now you can simply pick them up, disarm them, or move past them.

At the end of the small cave you come to the area where Letho was in Auckes's memories. Now when you enter it, you face a golem. If you've already faced a golem in the camp cave, you know exactly how to handle it. Just play to your build's strengths and do a lot of dodge-rolling. You get the David character attribute for defeating this golem.

Once the golem is defeated, loot its body and then loot a chest for some superb well-balanced daggers. At the rear of the room is Serrit. Speak with him briefly, which triggers a cutscene that advances the **Returning Memories** quest. Next, loot Serrit's body after he passes on. He carries the Negotiator, a silver sword that is not impressive in terms of damage or rune slots but does have a fairly high chance of inflicting the rare freeze critical effect. After Serrit passes on, leave the cave and return to the Kaedweni Camp.

Note

Upon your return to the Kaedweni Camp, linger for a bit by the camp crier. He says some new and rather interesting things about Saskia of Vergen's true nature.

Faith Symbolized

Now you have all four of the symbolic objects you need to resolve **The Eternal Battle**, the climax of this chapter. Before you attempt this, make all suitable preparations, as you can't backtrack. Make any bombs or traps you wish to use now. Also buy anything else you want to carry into Chapter 3 from the merchants, in particular the diagram of the draug armor, because all of the merchants inside the Kaedweni Camp are going to be shut down when you return.

When you're ready to begin, speak to Dethmold. You immediately get 1,500 XP for your previous adventures. King Henselt is now willing to part with the medallion you need to resolve this quest, which happens automatically. Speak with Dethmold again and say "I'm ready to lift the curse." After that, you must head into the entrance to the cursed battlefield next to the Camp Followers' Encampment to begin the next quest.

The Eternal Battle

Make sure you're prepared for a major battle with a unique enemy as part of this quest. Your equipment and how you've invested in Geralt's skills make a major difference in this battle. This enemy is mostly immune to critical effects but very vulnerable to being stunned or staggered. Alchemists should make preparations accordingly. Note that you can't use potions during this battle, but you can make good use of traps.

Mages who haven't leveled up Aard or Yrden are a bit boned here and should maybe get a stack of Zerrikanian suns or Talgar winters beforehand. Quen can be an effective defense in this battle, but you shouldn't rely on it completely. A mage who has Aard III or Yrden III should have no trouble.

Swordsmen are going to end up relying on maneuverability and how specialized they are for hitting hard with every blow. Quen can help with defense, but not as much as levels of Feet Work. A swordsman build should be, by this point in the game, well-equipped for handling this quest's challenges. If you're a struggling swordsman, there's no shame in prepping a pile of Zerrikanian suns or Talgar winters just in case.

Once you trigger this quest, you go into a sequence where Geralt is possessed by the spirit of a soldier who must cut down the standard bearer of the Dun Banner. The standard bearer has taken the form of a draugir and you must defeat it without access to Quen or dodge rolls or any of your usual witcher tricks. You also have no NPCs to aid you, while the draugir is aided by three knights. Work on trying to eliminate the three knights without losing too much vitality. Focus on trying to get behind your enemies. If your Geralt build has Riposte, that skill carries over and is useful here. Be careful while keeping your distance, as the edges of the battlefield around the draugir are wreathed in flames that absolutely will incinerate and kill you. On the other hand, you can drive enemies into the flames to do pretty serious damage.

The second part of the sequence requires you to play as a Kaedweni soldier who is tasked with telling his commander that his unit needs reinforcements. Sadly, he must do this while running a gauntlet of flaming arrows fired by archers from his own side. There are wooden structures on the field you can use for cover, but huddle behind them too long and the flaming arrows destroy them. Move quickly from cover point to cover point between volleys of the flaming arrows. Each of the volleys is heralded by the sound of a horn. Basically, if the volley heralded by a horn won't hit you, then choose that moment to move to fresh cover. After you make it to the last cover point indicated on the map, you can simply walk forward to trigger cutscenes.

For the third part of the sequence, you are possessed by Seltkirk of Gulet. For this, you simply need to move near Vandergrift's position. You must fight two groups of Kaedweni knights on the way in. Seltkirk has massive amounts of vitality, as part of modeling how he was the best Aedirnian knight ever, so you should have little trouble defeating the groups of Kaedweni. If you're having a hard time with them (or playing on a high difficulty level), slowly inch forward down the slope. It's tricky, but possible, to attract attention from only one or two enemies in the second group, instead of triggering the entire group at once. As you draw near the draug's position (for Vandergrift has become a draug after death), a draugir materializes that is his standard bearer. A cutscene ensues as you approach it, and before this battle you get to control Geralt once more. Get the draugir down to about half vitality to trigger another cutscene.

Now for the climax of this quest: You must battle Vandergrift's spirit, magnified by the curse into the form of a draug. A draug is basically a pile of fire and hate, its body made of animated metal. As you might expect, it has both a massive pile of vitality and a separate meter of additional armor strength. There is nothing sneaky or tricky you have to do here to whittle that down. You just have to survive long enough to beat the living hell out of it. Talgar winters do significant damage to it, while also cutting its charging attacks short. Zerrikanian suns can have a similar effect. Aard and Yrden at higher levels stagger it, while at lower levels the draug can shrug them off.

Be sure to beat on the draug mercilessly whenever it's staggered. Roll away when the draug turns into a whirlwind of armor fragments. Never let yourself get too far away from the draug, though. The draug punishes you for trying to play keep away too aggressively by having its archers rain down hails of arrows, and its artillery uses trebuchets to rain fireballs on the field. You can evade the fireballs by dodge-rolling away from areas on the ground that turn red, and evade the arrows by dodge-rolling in any single direction to get clear. The danger of evading like this, of course, is that you're so far away from the draug when its rain of arrows or fire stops that it decides to just do it again.

The best way to damage the draug is to wait for him to charge, dodge-roll aside, then get in behind him. The damage penalty the draug takes from back attacks is enormous and can let you whittle down his armor and vitality meters much faster than attacks from the front. This method is especially useful for swordsmen who've taken levels of Feet Work. Mages and alchemists can also make use of it but may need to stun the draug to make sure he doesn't move out of position before you can attack.

If you manage to play the zone game correctly and evade the draug's attacks without getting too far away from it, you should dish out enough damage to take it down. Once you get through its armor meter, it begins taking damage rapidly. You get a ton of loot for defeating it, including some materials necessary for creating the draug armor. You also unlock the Fat Man achievement.

There's one more phase to the quest. Now that the draug is defeated, Sabrina Glevissig's terrible rain of fireballs has begun. You are possessed for a final time by a priest who must guide his unit to Henselt's position, to inform him of the terror that has overtaken the battlefield. Don't worry about this turning into an escort mission; all you really need to do is get yourself to Henselt to trigger the concluding barrage of cutscenes. You can't dodge-roll as the priest, so just try to move away if the ground before you becomes red.

The concluding cutscenes lead to Geralt recovering a significant portion of his memory, as he expected, so resolving this quest also advances **Returning Memories**. During the ensuing dialogue with Dandelion, feel free to say whatever you want.

Conspiracy Theory

After you finish speaking with Dandelion, you find that you aren't allowed to enter the Kaedweni Camp and that Roche's Camp is abandoned. Head to Malget's house, where Roche is waiting. Give him some news, then head back to the camp. When you enter the camp, Kaedweni soldiers attack you. Defeating them shouldn't be difficult, but this is a bad sign of things to come.

When you return to the gates of the Kaedweni Camp, they are unguarded. When you enter, you're attacked by 8–12 Kaedweni soldiers. This fight requires a crowd control approach to be manageable, since you're fighting a ton of enemies at once and Roche is little more than a distraction. Use whatever tricks best suit your build. Be conservative with traps from this point forward, since you can't get any more until Chapter 3.

After you defeat the soldiers, head for the canteen, where something horrible awaits you. The cutscenes you trigger here resolve the quest, which is worth 500 XP. From here, you and Roche need to head to Vergen to try and catch up with Síle de Tansarville and the kingslayers. Pay a final visit to Raymond and try to lighten your load as much as possible.

The Siege of Vergen

To get to Vergen, pass through the tangle of ravines on the southern portion of the map. Take the same route you used to find the kingslayers' hideout. Now you should be able to pass beyond the cave to reach the area depicting a wrecked boat. You also run into a she-troll here. You can opt to fight the troll or try to talk to her calmly. By talking to her, you can find out a bit about what's going on in Vergen. After the she-troll is dealt with, give a little attention to the shipwreck beside her.

Caution

Even if you give all friendly responses to the she-troll, Roche usually begins attacking her after the dialogue ends. This automatically initiates combat, which forces you to kill her if you want to loot the shipwreck nearby. Because of this, it's not really worth it to go for the Friend of Trolls achievement on Roche's route. It's very easy to get the secret achievement for killing trolls, though.

Side Quest: Mystic River

Scan the wrecked ship to find a chest that contains the journal of the *Eyla Tarn* as well as some loot. Simply take the journal and you've advanced **Mystic River** as far as you can in Chapter 2. By fulfilling this step, though, you can now finish the quest off in Chapter 3.

The Siege of Vergen

Head past the she-troll. Expect to battle a great number of harpies and some Kaedweni soldiers along the way, but nothing too dangerous. The path eventually leads you to the troll, who is fighting a group of Kaedweni soldiers. If you want to kill the troll, get out your silver sword and do so before you defeat the Kaedwenis. If you kill the Kaedwenis and the troll is still alive, he automatically becomes friendly. Tell the troll that his wife might've crossed paths with Kaedwenis and he flies into a rage, actually helping you defeat the next group of soldiers you run across.

After that's done, you should be near the Vergen tunnels. Enter and you find that in addition to the usual rotfiends, mercenaries are infesting the place. The mercenaries aren't dangerous when you encounter them in small groups but can be a threat when fighting five or six at a time. You often find them being attacked by rotfiends, a situation where it's to your advantage to just stand back and let the two sides weaken each other before wading in.

Once you're inside the tunnels, follow the packs of mercenaries like a trail of murderous bread crumbs toward the entrance to Vergen. When you reach the large chamber where you battled the unusual bullvore earlier, you now find Dethmold, Adam Pangratt, and over half a dozen mercenaries waiting for you. Pause before entering this room to drink potions, prepare your pockets with bombs and throwing knives, and oil your blade with hanged man's venom. The battle that's upcoming can be incredibly tough.

What makes the fight hard is that you can't use the most obvious tactic here—taking out Dethmold first and then whittling away at the mercenaries. You cannot reduce Dethmold's vitality below 50 percent and it's a waste of time to try. Instead, you have to defeat all of the mercenaries and Pangratt while Dethmold is teleporting around the room shooting lightning at you. It is absolutely imperative that you buff yourself defensively as much as possible before you start this battle. Keep Quen up at all times to try and mitigate the heavy damage Dethmold's lightning bolts deal. Use every bomb and trap at your disposal to try to whittle the crowd's numbers down faster. If you've unlocked the final ability of a skill tree (Combat Acumen, Heliotrope, or Mutant), it should really come in handy here for helping you quickly defeat the soldiers.

Once all of the mercenaries are defeated, you can engage Dethmold. He's very quick and it's hard to interrupt his Quen or lightning spells with thrown daggers. The best time to attack him is right after he's thrown a lightning ball. He has to lower his defense for this, so you can use a light attack if he's marked to hit him from even a good distance away. If you're too far away to attack, throw a dagger at him. Dodge-roll constantly if you're not sure where he is, and keep Quen up, especially if your vitality is already low. If you can get Dethmold's vitality below 50 percent, he retreats.

Now you get a chance to decide whether to spare or kill Adam Pangratt. This has no effect on your game unless you killed Aryan La Valette earlier. If you did, then slaying Adam Pangratt counts toward unlocking the Executioner character attribute. Otherwise, it's a decision where you should just do whatever you're most comfortable with.

The battle in Vergen has gone badly and most of the town is blocked off. There's very little treasure to pick up here once you get past the shortcut building you must enter first thing. When you try to cross the wooden bridge, Roche smashes part of it in a cutscene. This forces you to use the game's top exit, which drops you out near a trio of Kaedwenis.

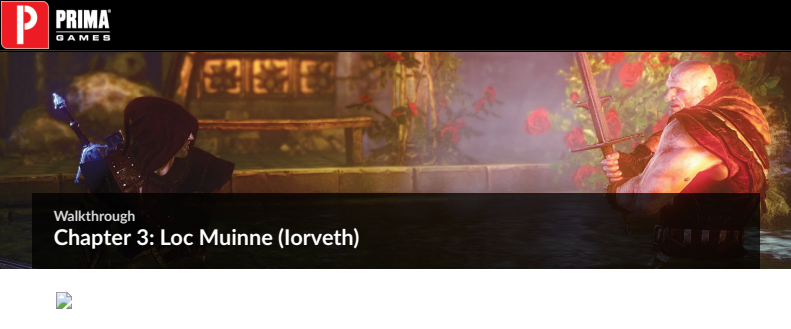
This battle can be surprisingly tough, since you're fighting them in close quarters. It may be worth your while to oil your blade and prepare potions before you step outside the shortcut building. Bombs and traps are highly effective on the soldiers, as are basic signs. That said, using almost any sign but Quen here can be life-threatening. These soldiers hit extremely hard, and on higher difficulties just a few blows can end it for you. The group combat skills on the swordsmanship tree come in handy here.

Once the soldiers are defeated, pay a quick visit to the Castle of Three Fathers to see how Iorveth is doing. Help the Scoia'tael near the entryway defeat the knot of Kaedweni soldiers they're battling. Once they're defeated, you can loot the dwarven enhancement from the chest near the entrance. Head down the main hallway to find Iorveth. Defeat the Kaedwenis he's battling to initiate a short, ominous cutscene. Your business done, leave and head for Philippa's house.

On the way, you come across a golem rampaging just outside Philippa's house. This is another challenging foe that you need to approach with your potion buffs up and your sword oiled appropriately. The golem does greater damage than the ones you battled before and can easily kill you with only a couple of blows, even on lower difficulties. On higher difficulties, it's a one-shot machine. Keep Quen up and dodge-roll away from it whenever it rushes you. Hit it with strong attacks after it whiffs an attack, then quickly dodge-roll away when it starts blocking. If you can keep from getting hit too often, the golem should go down quickly enough.

Next, head into Philippa's house. You arrive just in time to see Síle teleport away, then Henselt and his men barge in after you. Henselt bars the door and orders his men to kill you. First two rush you, then two more aided by Henselt himself. The first wave is very manageable, provided you stay clear of Henselt's shield-bearers. They push you away if you draw too near, which can inflict knockdown. You can get killed in the second wave pretty easily if you get surrounded. If your potion buffs are still up after fighting the golem, you should have an easier time beating them. Keep Quen up and try to take advantage of the close quarters with traps. It also helps to take Henselt out early, then pick off his two knights more carefully.

After you defeat them, you face a final major decision in this chapter. In the ensuing dialogue with Henselt, you can choose to allow Roche to kill Henselt, or you can try to convince Roche to spare Henselt. Whatever decision you make here has repercussions in Chapter 3 and affects the ending of your game. If you've already killed Aryan La Valette and Adam Pangratt, letting Roche kill Henselt allows you to unlock the Executioner character attribute. Think carefully and make the decision you think you'll be happiest with in the long run. This concludes Chapter 2 and should unlock the achievement Alea Iacta Est.



Walkthrough

Chapter 3: Loc Muinne (Iorveth)

For a Higher Cause!

All roads lead to Loc Muinne now. Your first task is to find a way to get into the city, so you can track down Philippa Eilhart and find Triss. Begin by following Iorveth and helping him kill harpies. These fights should be fairly trivial for you, since you finish Iorveth's version of Chapter 2 at a fairly high level. As you work your way down the winding mountain path, you eventually come within sight of an encampment of knights from the Order of the Flaming Rose.

At this point, Iorveth mentions that the Order of the Flaming Rose is dangerous. This is a problem for you, because they're camped out right in front of the city's main gate. Iorveth proposes entering Loc Muinne through a secret path instead, since that lets you avoid dealing with the Order entirely. Now, it may appear here that you face a choice between following Iorveth and dealing with the Order, but in most games (see sidebar) that is not the case.

If you attempt to approach the order, you initiate a brief dialogue sequence. When the dialogue is over, the Order of the Flaming Rose becomes hostile toward you and begins attacking. Regardless of how powerful your Geralt build is or how skillful a gamer you are, it is not possible to defeat the Order of the Flaming Rose. The Order has an infinite number of soldiers, you may even notice enemies respawning after you've killed them. The only way you can enter Loc Muinne and advance the game at this point, unless you are playing the PC version of the game and meet certain requirements (see below), is to retreat from the Order and follow Iorveth toward the secret cave.

For PC Players

You have another option for entering Loc Muinne if you are playing the PC version of The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition and have imported a save from The Witcher where Geralt has allied with the Order. If your game meets these requirements, then the Order's current headmaster is Siegfried of Denesle, who will not be hostile toward Geralt. If Siegfried is alive, then when Geralt speaks with the Order, he will be permitted to pass through their camp and enter the Loc Muinne through its main gates.

If you have imported the correct save data for creating this scenario, you also add an additional merchant to Chapter 3, Polycarp of Rinde. If you enter Loc Muinne through the main gates, then remember that you need to find and meet up with Iorveth once you've entered the city. Finally, you may wish to obtain the silver sword Deithwen before you enter the city.

Polycarp of Rinde

Item	Price	Item	Price
Sun Rune	376	Magic Wrap	235
Ysgith Rune	501	Steel Plate Enhancement	65
Earth Rune	251	Diagram: Blue Meteorite Ore	301
Moon Rune	376	Diagram: Red Meteorite Ore	239
Fire Rune	501	Diagram: Yellow Meteorite Ore	239
Diamond Dust	29	Mail Enhancement	158
Amethyst Dust	22	Armor Enhancement	32
Cloth	20	Leather Enhancement	33
Leather	20	Diagram: Amethyst Armor Enhancement	201
Hardened Leather	26	Diagram: Diamond Armor Reinforcements	276
Studded Leather	39	Studded Leather Reinforcement	64
Diagram: Leather	176	Fibre Enhancer	33
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264	Reinforced Leather Enhancement	34
Diagram: Diamond Dust	314	Iron Ore	20
Harvall	1470	Silver Ore	45

The Secret Cave

Iorveth immediately enters the secret cave if you move toward him, but don't follow him inside just yet. Explore the area to the north of the secret cave's entrance first. You come to a narrow gully patrolled by two arachasae. One spawns on either side of you, so it can be helpful to dodge-roll to try and get on either side of the pair. The arachasae themselves shouldn't be difficult for you to defeat at this point if you stick to your build's strengths.

After you loot the arachasae's bodies, head into the gully's dead-end area. You should see a wrecked wagon, a pile of bones, and some lost cargo. Scan the area so you can pick up random loot and orens from the cargo. Examine the pile of bones to find the silver sword Deithwen. Deithwen's +25 percent damage to large monsters and +25 percent damage to gargoyles makes it ideal for completing the tasks that await you in Chapter 3. Equip it immediately and slot it with runes as soon as you have the opportunity.

Head back to the cave entrance and follow Iorveth. The secret cave is a relatively tame area at first, though you do immediately spot an arachas once you step inside. You reach the arachas once you round the first bend. It shouldn't be a very hard fight with your current equipment and at your current level. The main trick is that, depending on exactly when you enter combat with the arachas, you may also be fighting some endrega warriors and guards at the same time. The path through the cave is otherwise very linear, with the occasional dead body to loot for orens or rare equipment. There's also a little bit of random loot.

When you emerge from the cave, follow Iorveth down another winding path. After battling more harpies, you come to some rocks you can use to climb over the city's walls. Follow Iorveth up, and you can eventually drop down over the walls of Loc Muinne into a small courtyard.

Loc Muinne

So it turns out the courtyard is patrolled by gargoyles, a type of enemy you're encountering for the first time. Gargoyles hit hard and tend to spawn in groups of three to five. If you manage to defeat one, it explodes upon death into a rain of fiery debris. This explosion hits much harder than a rotfiend's death throes and can inflict incineration. This fight can be lethal if you aren't ready to take it seriously. Gargoyles hit hard, and in such a small area, they can easily get behind you and deal pretty serious damage. Even a build with maxed Quen may find gargoyles overwhelming. If you are careful not to get surrounded, you should be able to get through the battle using your build's usual strengths.

After you defeat the gargoyles, follow Iorveth on a circuitous route around the various royal encampments to an area just outside the Temerian camp. At this point you need to make another choice. You have to find a way to get into the dungeons where Philippa Eilhart is being held. You have two options: You can try to find a way in through the sewer system beneath the city, or you can attack the nearby Temerian camp and get yourself arrested. Regardless of what you say here, you aren't committed to that course of action. Actually, you can ignore all of the main storyline for this chapter now and go do some side quests. This is highly recommended.

Now that you can take a breather to explore, you discover that Loc Muinne is unlike any of the prior environments you've explored in the game. It's a massive area, easily the size of both Flotsam and its surrounding forest. Parts of the city are crowded and teeming with life, while others are infested with monsters. While exploring Loc Muinne, you can rapidly go from being perfectly safe to being assaulted by irate guards, harpies, or a throng of gargoyles. Most of the city's points of interest are divided between the town square and amphitheater areas, with everything else often serving as hostile (or at least dangerous) territory.

Caution

While exploring, *do not* approach the table next to the inn where you see men playing dice. If you attempt to interact with these dice players, it ends with Geralt being arrested. This forces the quest **For a Higher Cause!** to advance. You won't be able to do anything else until you've gotten Geralt out of prison and decided whether to assist Triss or Saskia.

Amphitheater

This is actually the area just outside the massive amphitheater where the summit is being held. You arrive before deliberations begin, so the air is full of anticipation and a carnival-like atmosphere. The main attractions are NPCs and merchants, but at the far north of the area you can find one of the three gargoyle courtyards you need to fulfill the side quest **The Gargoyle Contract**.

Falas

Craftsman / Dice Poker

Item	Price	Item	Price
Sun Rune	376	Diagram: Yellow Meteorite Ore	239
Ysgith Rune	501	Mail Enhancement	158
Earth Rune	251	Armor Enhancement	32
Moon Rune	376	Leather Enhancement	33
Fire Rune	501	Diagram: Amethyst Armor Enhancement	201
Diamond Dust	29	Diagram: Diamond Armor Reinforcements	276
Amethyst Dust	22	Studded Leather Reinforcement	64
Cloth	20	Fibre Enhancer	33
Leather	20	Reinforced Leather Enhancement	34
Hardened Leather	26	Iron Ore	20
Studded Leather	39	Diagram: Superb Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	339
Diagram: Leather	176	Diagram: Superb Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	551
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264	Diagram: Superb Red Meteorite Silver Sword	314
Diagram: Diamond Dust	314	Koviri Sword	910
Diagram: Ceremonial Sword of Deithwen	626	Novigradan Sword	1576
Diagram: Dearg Ruadhri	1751	Superb Temerian Jackboots	698
Gynvael Aedd	1402	Superb Kaedweni Jackboots	808
Magic Wrap	235	Temerian Falconer's Gauntlets	302
Steel Plate Enhancement	65	Kaedweni Falconer's Gauntlets	577
Diagram: Blue Meteorite Ore	301	Superb Temerian Leather Breeches	426
Diagram: Red Meteorite Ore	239	Kaedweni Galligaskins	306

Falas is a craftsman and has a really good shop list, despite not being listed as a merchant in your in-game mini-map. The most notable things he sells are diagrams for the various colors of meteorite ore, a few unique weapons, some really good armor enhancers like the steel plate enhancement, and magic wraps. He also sells the diagram for the diamond armor reinforcements, which offer +2 and are relatively easy to make at this point in the game.

Ilona

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Ilona is basically a trash merchant, and not one in a convenient location for selling stuff off. The real point of interest with Ilona is her day job as the bearded she-elf. Ask her about her beard and she offers to grow it in for 200 orens. (You can pay her up to 281 orens if you want, but there's no real point to this.) After you give her the money, go talk to her again to see a truly magnificent beard.

Near the area where Ilona does business, you should find two other merchants with basically identical "trash merchant" shop lists. Both are women with randomly generated names. After you complete either the main quest **The Spellbreaker** or the main quest **Where Is Triss Merigold?**, these two merchants disappear. There's no particular reason to deal with these women over Ilona, who is far more entertaining.

Aryan La Valette

If you rescued Aryan La Valette earlier in your game, you can encounter him in an area just southwest of the amphitheater. You can have a conversation with him and get a little information about the summit and its importance. If you didn't save Aryan La Valette, then obviously, he doesn't appear here.

Town Square

To the east of the amphitheater lies the beating heart of Loc Muinne, such as it is. In this area you can find most of Chapter 3's best merchants, as well as the inn. To the north of the town square lie most of the NPCs who indulge in mini-games, as well as the entrance to the sewers. While there's more to do in the town square part of Loc Muinne, it's also far more dangerous than the amphitheater. You're very close to Nilfgaardian and Radovidian guards who attack you the moment you draw too close, and a simple left turn into the wrong area can lead to you being attacked by gargoyles or harpies. It can help to spend some time getting a feel for the labyrinthine streets and how relatively safe various areas are.

Note

If you get lost while exploring the areas around the town square, it's entirely possible to accidentally trigger the resolution to the quest **A Score to Settle**. Essentially, if you wander into the area northeast of the town square where the non-hostile dice players required for this chapter's **Poker Face** quest gather, you are automatically approached by Silgrat if you began the quest in Chapter 2. Once Silgrat is defeated, you can resume exploring again.

Dalum

Storage

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Dalum is the owner of Loc Muinne's makeshift town inn, the Eternal Flame. Speak to him to access your storage, which really comes in handy in this part of the game. He's also a trash merchant, so he's useful for selling off stuff you decide you don't want to store.

Bras of Ban Ard

Craftsman / Dice Poker

Item	Price	Item	Price
Diagram: Zerrikanterment	501	Silver Ore	45
Sting	126	Diagram: Superb Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	339
Armor of Tir Na Lia	3207	Diagram: Superb Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	551
Short Elven Sihil	1045	Diagram: Superb Red Meteorite Silver Sword	314
Elven Sword	1046	Koviri Sword	910
Rusty Well-Balanced Dagger	26	Novigradan Sword	1576
Well-Balanced Dagger	39	The Runes of Power I	95
Robust Well-Balanced Dagger	51	The Runes of Power II	95
Superb Well-Balanced Dagger	76	The Runes of Power III	95
Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	51	The Runes of Power IV	95
Robust Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	76	Vran Armor Enhancement	332
Superb Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	101	Magic Wrap	235
Iron Ore	20		

You can speak to Bras just outside the Eternal Flame. Bras is a craftsman and has an excellent shop list. Among his more interesting wares are the *Runes of Power* books needed to complete **The Gargoyle Contract**, the diagram for the exceptional silver sword Zerrikanterment, vran armor enhancements, and magic wraps. Look carefully at the abilities of the Zerrikanterment before you decide which silver sword you want to use through the end of the game. While there is another silver sword you can loot this chapter with higher base damage, the Zerrikanterment is about as good and may have special effects you find preferable. Bras of Ban Ard is also instrumental in two side quests, **From a Bygone Era** and **The Gargoyle Contract**.

The Incredible Lockhart

Dice Poker

Item	Price	Item	Price
The History of the Council of Mages	64	Diagram: Hardened Leather	251
The Duties and Goals of the Lodge	126	Diagram: Studded Leather	276
Formula: Tiara	84	Diagram: Elemental Stone	214
Diagram: Sun Rune	439	Diagram: Oil	126
Diagram: Ysgith Rune	439	Diagram: Leather	176
Diagram: Earth Rune	439	Diagram: Essence of Water	226
Diagram: Moon Rune	439	Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264
Diagram: Fire Rune	564	Diagram: Diamond Dust	314
Sun Rune	376	Formula: Tawny Owl	207
Ysgith Rune	501	Formula: Specter Oil	104
Earth Rune	251	Formula: Necrophage Oil	125
Moon Rune	376	Formula: Blade Oil	70
Fire Rune	501	Formula: Insectoid Oil	111
Balisse	11	Formula: Gadwall	139
White Myrtle Petals	12	Formula: Thunderbolt	125
Celandine	10	Formula: White Raffard's Decoction	97
Wolfsbane	15	Formula: Hanged Man's Venom	90
Scleroderm	14	Formula: Arachnid Oil	104
Cortinarius	16	Formula: Lapwing	139
Bryonia	24	Formula: Maribor Forest	152
Mandrake Root	20	Diamond Dust	29
Verbena	24	Amethyst Dust	22
Twine	14	Cloth	20
Wolf's Aloe Leaves	126	Leather	20
Green Mold	126	Oil	14
Diagram: Solid Cloth	251	Essence of Water	14

The Incredible Lockhart sells potion formulas, alchemical ingredients, and a variety of diagrams. The best of them are probably the diagrams for the various types of runes, which are quite easy to make in this chapter of the game. Otherwise, you won't be dealing with Lockhart too often, though he does crop up in a mini-game side quest.

The Incredible Lockhart is named in honor of a character from the Harry Potter novel series, Gilderoy Lockhart.

Earos

Craftsman

Item	Price	Item	Price
Harpy Trap	126	Phosphorescent Crystal	20
Conflagration	76	Thumper	14
Talgar Winter	76	Leather	20
Clawer	51	Timber	7
Biter	51	Endrega Hide	89
Diagram: Harpy Trap	201	Twine	14
Diagram: Conflagration	251	Grapeshot	101
Diagram: Clawer	189	Formula: Dancing Star	84
Diagram: Talgar Winter	276	Formula: Dragon's Dream	111
Diagram: Rage	251	Formula: Devil's Puffball	77
Diagram: Biter	226	Formula: Flare	35
Diagram: Well-Balanced Dagger	89	Formula: Stenchbulb	63
Diagram: Blue Meteorite Ore	301	Formula: Zerrikanian Sun	97
Rotten Meat	7	Formula: Grapeshot	70
Bauble	14	Formula: Red Haze	84
Endrega Gland Extract	14		

The Vergen ratcatcher apparently ran off and joined the circus after Henselt's army was defeated, but he's still willing to craft traps for you. Earos is back in Loc Muinne with his entire Chapter 2 shop list intact, so you can buy basically the same sorts of things from him. If there's a trap diagram you want and haven't picked up yet, go see Earos about it.

Felicia Cori

Barber / Dice Poker

Item	Price	Item	Price
Formula: Rook	173	Three Years Among the Endregas	64
Formula: Golden Oriole	63	Wraiths: Fear and Trembling	95
Petri's Philtre	26	Bruxae—Eulogists of Death	101
Formula: Falka's Blood	139	How to Kill a Bullvore	126
Formula: Brown Oil	125	Beings of the Element of Earth	189
Formula: Cat	70	Of Trolls and Trolling	157
Formula: Samum	104	Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters—Maintenance and Repair	126
Formula: Swallow	70	Dearhenna's Memoirs	1
Formula: Tiara	84	Formula: Tawny Owl	207
Formula: Wolf	77	Formula: Specter Oil	104
Formula: Whirl	207	Formula: Necrophage Oil	125
Formula: Brock	104	Formula: Blade Oil	70
Formula: Virga	104	Formula: Insectoid Oil	111
Formula: Stammelford's Philtre	207	Formula: Gadwall	139
Diagram: Solid Cloth	251	Formula: Thunderbolt	125
Diagram: Hardened Leather	251	Formula: White Raffard's Decoction	97
Diagram: Studded Leather	276	Formula: Hanged Man's Venom	90
Diagram: Elemental Stone	214	Formula: Arachnid Oil	104
Diagram: Oil	126	Formula: Lapwing	139
Diagram: Leather	176	Formula: Maribor Forest	152
Diagram: Essence of Water	226	The Temerian Royal Dynasty	64
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264	The Viziman Uprising	64
Diagram: Diamond Dust	314	The Temerian Special Forces	64
Balisse	11	Monstrum, Or a Portrayal of Witchers	64
White Myrtle Petals	12	The Realms of the Nordlings	64
Celandine	10	The Valley of the Flowers	64
Wolfsbane	15	The Pontar Valley	64
Scleroderm	14	The Rose and the Flame	64
Cortinarius	16	The Conjunction of the Spheres	64
Bryonia	24	Vevypotis—A Forgotten God	64
Mandrake Root	20	Marshall Milan Raupenneck	64
Verbena	24	The Nilfgaardian Provinces	64
Surgical Tools	164	Diamond Dust	29
The Runes of Power I	95	Amethyst Dust	22
The Runes of Power II	95	Cloth	20
The Runes of Power III	95	Leather	20
The Runes of Power IV	95	Oil	14
The Horrors of War: Rotfiends	64	Essence of Water	14
Harpies—Daughters of the Gale	95	Essence of Death	189
The Arachas—A Study	145	Arachas Eyes	439
Drowners: A Textbook for Initiates of the Order of the Flaming Rose	32	Troll Tongue	439
Nekkers in the Mist	32		

Felicia isn't marked on the in-game map, but she's not hard to find. Her shop list isn't exactly the same as it was in Chapter 2, but it's very similar. She still sells mainly potion formulas, books, and items for crafting. Curiously enough, she still sells the surgical tools that you needed for finishing **With Flickering Heart**. You can buy them again here, but don't expect them to do anything.

Marcus

Item	Price	Item	Price
Anabolic Steroids	251	Amethyst Dust	22
Formula: Wolf	77	Balisse	11
Formula: Whirl	207	White Myrtle Petals	12
Formula: Brock	104	Celandine	10
Formula: Virga	104	Wolfsbane	15
Formula: Stammelford's Philtre	207	Scleroderm	14
Formula: Maribor Forest	152	Cortinarius	16
Formula: Tawny Owl	207	Bryonia	24
Formula: Specter Oil	104	Mandrake Root	20
Formula: Necrophage Oil	104	Verbena	24
Formula: Blade Oil	70	Twine	14
Formula: Insectoid Oil	111	Wolf's Aloe Leaves	126
Diamond Dust	29	Green Mold	126

Marcus primarily sells herbs for alchemy and some potion formulas. He also sells the Anabolic Steroids potion, which you can take as part of this chapter's arm-wrestling quest. You can buy as many Anabolic Steroids potions as you want, but it doesn't do anything that's mechanically useful outside of its quest role.

Points of Interest

Harpies

There's an area to the northeast of Loc Muinne where you are attacked by harpies nearly every time you pass through. You are likely to encounter them for the first time when you go to do this chapter's **Poker Face** side quest. In terms of difficulty the encounter is trivial, but it can be really useful if you end up needing to grind orens in this chapter. You can just kill harpies until you have as many monster guts as you can carry, then go sell them all off. Since harpy feathers sell for so much, you can quickly rack up spare cash this way at relatively little risk to yourself.

Nilfgaardian Bounty Hunters

The first time you venture down a particular path northeast of the town square, you trigger an encounter with Nilfgaardian soldiers who want to collect the bounty on Geralt's head. Defeating them is more challenging than beating the prior groups of bounty hunters you've faced, but overall should be a fairly manageable task. The main difficulty you face in this fight is the combat mage, so depending on your build you may want to make preparations before triggering the battle. The usual tricks for fighting mages work against this one, as do the usual tricks for fighting groups of armed humans.

Royal Guards

Some areas of Loc Muinne are patrolled by guards attached to the militaries of the various visiting kings. For the most part, these guards hate you and attack you if you pass by too closely. Whether your sword is unsheathed or not makes no difference; the guards tend to be hostile on sight. The thickest pack of guards you can wade into is the one in the Temerian camp, which you should only visit if you choose to resolve the main quest **For a Higher Cause** by getting arrested. Otherwise, entering that area is certain death since the guards infinitely respawn.

Otherwise, the main groups of guards you pass by are the guards from the Redanian camp in the town square and guards by the entrance to the Nilfgaardian camp a little north of that. Note that if you've already completed **Where Is Triss Merigold?**, the Nilfgaardian guards won't be there. Otherwise, be cautious while heading toward the area where the harpies spawn or areas beyond. You pass rather closely to the Nilfgaardian camp. You also pass by the Redanian guard whenever dealing with the main town square merchants.

Street Preacher

Just across the street from the Eternal Fire is a street preacher who springs to life and begins haranguing the crowd whenever you pass by. This guy has nothing to do with any quests or getting loot, but you should pause and listen to his full rants once. He has two rants, both of which are too long and rambling to hear completely while you're just running around. They're pretty hilarious if you hear them in full, though, so pause if you happen to hear him saying something new while you run by.

Side Quest: The Secrets of Loc Muinne

The first time you enter the town square, you stumble across a scene where a mercenary walks off with an advance instead of finishing a job. The explorers who failed to hire him immediately try to get you to take the job instead. If you want to accept it, say "You'll need to pay me." At that point, the explorers try to get you to accept a lump sum payment at the end of the quest. You can say "Agreed, but it'll cost you more" to agree to those terms. You can pick the other dialogue options to attempt to persuade or intimidate the mages into giving you an advance.

After the mages depart, head into the tower that stands north of the town square. You enter at the top of a spiral staircase that runs down through the different layers of the catacombs that run beneath the city. Enter the door nearest where you enter from the street, near the top of the staircase. This should take you to an area guarded by wraiths and bruxae. You should have little trouble defeating them. Bruxae are essentially female wraiths and can be fought using the same tactics.

To proceed, you need to deal with the resonating crystals near the cellar. Basically, the crystals are designed to hold the power of a certain kind of magic. One pair is designed to hold Aard and the other pair Igni. You can work this out easily by trial and error or just glance at the guide's map labels to proceed. When you have lit up both pairs of resonating crystals, a door at the bottom of the stairwell opens. Enter to examine a room dominated by a massive stone statue of a vran. In the next chamber, bruxae and wraiths spawn as you step through.

Descend the stairs and examine the area in front of the statue. In one corner, you should find a chest stuffed with hundreds of orens. At the feet of the statue, you find the forgotten vran sword, the most powerful steel sword that can be obtained in a standard game. Equip it immediately and slot it with runes if you can.

A guard wearing a mask and robes appears behind you and attacks. The guard fights like a basic spellcaster, using Quen to defend himself and throwing fireballs at you. He doesn't have a very stiff offense, but between his vitality and his repeated use of Quen, damaging him can be a slow process. When he reaches 75 percent, 50 percent, and 25 percent vitality, the guard teleports to an upper area of the room and summons a horde of wraiths to fight you. Switch to your silver sword and dispatch them quickly. The guard shoots fireballs at you while you battle the wraiths. This works a bit like the trebuchet fire did in Chapter 2. Dodge-roll to evade the explosion. After that, the guard teleports back down so you can resume trying to damage him again.

When you defeat the guard, another door at the far side of the room slowly slides open. Duck into it to find a room patrolled by wraiths and bruxae. Defeat them, then loot the room. Most of the loot is random, but you can find the diagram for Nilfgaardian falconer's gauntlets there. The one way you can exit this room takes you to the base of the spiral stairwell that runs down from the tower and into the catacombs. From here, you should enter a door that's about halfway up the spiral to find the area where the explorers and their hired mages are waiting.

One of the mages turns out to be a familiar face, Philippa's "student" Cynthia, who disappeared in Chapter 2. She's here with another Nilfgaardian mage, Adalbert. You can have a heated conversation with them about Triss, and then you must choose either to work with them or to refuse the job. If you refuse to work with Cynthia's group by saying "I'm not about to work for Nilfgaard," then you find yourself in combat with Cynthia and Adalbert. This amounts to fighting four mages at once, since Adalbert uses a multiplication spell to fight alongside two copies of himself. Each copy of Adalbert must be defeated individually to end the spell.

Each mage uses Quen for defense and teleports if you get too close. Cynthia attacks with fire while the three Adalberts attack with lightning. This fight is incredibly dangerous, since you're stuck in a relatively small area. Cynthia is generally the easiest to defeat. Take advantage of the great central pillar in the middle of the room as cover to deflect the lightning blasts from the Adalberts. The real challenge of this battle is finding a way to knock down the Adalberts before they can chip away at your vitality.

You can do it the hard way, by keeping Quen up and then rolling in to attack them when they're in their spell-casting animations. If you can catch one of the mages with Quen down, you can chew through his or her vitality quickly. Mage builds with the Aard III or alchemists with Zerrikanian suns can make quick work of this battle by stunning the mages through their Quen defense shields. Once stunned, most mages go down with only a handful of blows, or much less if you trigger an instant kill.

After you've defeated the four mages, you can loot the chamber for a massive amount of orens, but you immediately fail the quest. The explorers who hired you chew you out for murdering everybody. From here you can explore a bit to pick up loot, but you cannot access any of the quest's other maps due to all the mages being dead. Proceed with the next side quest if you're okay with this.

If you aren't, then let's back up a bit and assume that you don't want to kill the mages. Say "Fine, I'll help you" when you reach the right branch of the conversation. Cynthia's group remains friendly and now you can simply follow them to your next objective. When the group pauses at the iron gate, step through first. Battle the group of rotfiends beyond. This battle should be relatively easy. The mages help you, so keep Quen up to protect against the moments where they inevitably and accidentally shoot you in the back with fire or lightning.

Next you come to a room thick with greenery, where endregas led by a queen endrega appear to attack you. This proceeds basically like the rotfiend battle—just keep Quen up and use whatever tactics suit your build. Be sure to loot the bodies here, as the queen endrega tends to have really good drops. Among them will be the queen endrega's pheromones, which you need to fulfill the quest **An Encrypted Manuscript**. After this battle, keep following the main group. A cutscene triggers. Wait while Cynthia dispels the illusion over the hidden door. Another cutscene shows you the door's gimmick in action. It asks riddles. Those who answer correctly get to pass through. Those who answer incorrectly die by fire. To get past the door, Geralt must answer a riddle correctly. If you answer incorrectly, you get hit by a bolt of fire that does massive damage and probably kills you. You can't outrun the attack, either.

Fortunately, it's easy to answer the riddles correctly. If you want to do things "honestly" and try to figure out the answers yourself, then use the following method. After the door golem gives you one of the three possible riddles, ask your allies what they think. Listen carefully to what they say. Your allies always help you by tipping you off to which answers are wrong. Anything an ally suggests as an answer is going to be incorrect. They usually suggest four different possible answers in their conversation. You usually select an answer to the door golem's riddle from a list of six possible answers. So, after listening to your allies eliminate certain answers, you only have to decide between the two remaining. You've got a 50-50 chance of being right, and usually one of the two possible answers left fits the riddle more intuitively.

Alternatively, you can decide that guessing games are for chumps and just read the correct answer here:

Riddle: Pleasant or terrible, I come at night or in daytime. Short or long, but yours alone, essential, I am…

Answer: A dream.

Riddle: Capable of kindness and cruelty, I take victims when I sour. I can be on your side or wrong you. I bring gifts, though you already have me.

Answer: Fate.

Riddle: I'm seen to fly, described as hard. I can be your currency and heal all wounds, but not many things can stand my test.

Answer: Time.

After you pass through the door, you trigger another cutscene. This should clue you in to the fact that a fight against human opponents is coming up. Follow the group, then a cutscene introduces a group of Redanian knights who don't take the idea of competition kindly. There's a lot of them in a relatively small space, which always makes a fight more dangerous. On the other hand, you have four mages with you and they don't have any. Throw up Quen, oil your steel blade with hanged man's venom, and then wade into the bastards. Keep Quen up so your mage allies don't accidentally set you on fire. Home in on Redanians who are being incinerated, as they'll have a hard time defending themselves.

After you clear out the Redanians, you come to another riddle guardian. Before you answer its riddle, loot the room. There's a fair amount of random loot as well as some books that can help you answer the guardian's riddle. The books are the *Astrological Charts, The Gnomes of Mahakam and Tir Tochair, Astrological Curios*, and *Legendary Treasures*. This guardian's riddle is very different from the first set of riddles. What's going on here is essentially a pressure-plate puzzle, where you must decode the three verses of the riddle to place three of your companions on the correct three pressure plates. There is a pressure plate in front of each of the nine frescoes painted in the nine alcoves of the room. As you go through the verse, you must deduce which of the three possible options is the one that is correct. If you select an incorrect option, then three gargoyles drop into the room and you must defeat them before you can try again.

The exact riddle the guardian gives you is, "A group of travelers wandering through the dark. Three guides above them so three were marked. At night they trailed a drake serpentine, and a silver lady, shining and fine, if only her visage she would deign to unfold. By day they followed a mountain-vault—its riches untold." You must analyze the meaning of each verse to figure out which of the three possible frescoes corresponds to the correct pressure plate. Basically, the verses and the possible answers you can give correspond like this.

First verse: At night they trailed a drake serpentine

Options: The hourglass, the dragon constellation, the allegory of alchemical transformation

Second verse: A silver lady, shining and fine, if only her visage she would deign to unfold

Options: The white rose, the full moon, the death's head

Third verse: By day they followed a mountain-vault—its riches untold

Options: The ravine, the tower, the mine entrance in the mountainside

There is no simple way to figure out the correct sequence. Read each of the quest-related books you can loot in this room. The books give you an idea of how Dearhenna saw the world and what sorts of things he valued. When your companions each suggest a possible interpretation of each verse, you should select the interpretation that seems closest to what Dearhenna would've thought, based on what you've read in the books he kept around. If you don't want to bother with trying to guess it yourself, the correct answers are, in sequence:

The dragon constellation

The full moon

The mine entrance in the mountainside

After you enter the correct combination, a cutscene wipes out the member of your party who refused to stand on a pressure plate. The door to the next room opens, where a golem awaits you. This isn't the usual type of golem that attacks immediately; instead you can speak with it. Ask it every question that you can. If you ask it every possible question, you should open up a new dialogue option at the main branch, the ability to say "I know enough." If you take that option, you can then say things that may let you pass the golem without a fight. Here is a highly entertaining sequence of responses for bypassing the golem:

- "I know you're a guardian, and I respect that."
- "I'm a guest here and I wish to talk."
- "Let's talk about lies and delusions."
- "Only you and the master's will exist. Everything else is doubtful."

If you attempt to use any Axii sign hex on the golem during the conversation, it always fails and provokes the golem into attacking you along with two duplicates of itself. You also end up in a fight if at any point you choose the option "This is going nowhere." It is also possible to incite the golem into attacking you after you've gotten into the "I know enough" conversation options. For instance, saying "With Dearhenna's notes, we can free you" triggers an attack. The golems are far from invincible and you can defeat them by using the tactics you've used to battle elementals before. Dodge-roll to keep from getting hit much and keep Quen up. If one of the golems is being pelted by the NPCs, try to focus your blows on it so you can put it down a bit faster. After the golems are defeated, loot their remains, as you may get a rare golem trophy for defeating them. Then, loot the rest of the room.

Side Quest: Dearhenna's Journal

If you glance around Dearhenna's study, it should become clear that there are four quest items in it. These items are Dearhenna's notes I, II, III, and V. You can pick them up in any order. Once you obtain any one of them, you trigger the side quest **Dearhenna's Journal**. This quest should be treated as a sub-quest whose outcome is affected by **The Secrets of Loc Muinne**. Read on to see how the various outcomes of **The Secrets of Loc Muinne** affect the outcome of **Dearhenna's Journal**. How **Dearhenna's Journal** resolves directly affects another linked side quest, **A Tome Truly Rare**, that you may be able to pursue directly after finishing **The Secrets of Loc Muinne**. For now, just pick up all the Dearhenna's notes you can, then approach Cynthia and Adalbert at the rear of the room.

This triggers a cutscene where Cynthia dispels another illusion, revealing a strange artifact. This initiates a dialogue sequence. Ask her every question you can about the Wild Hunt and Letho before selecting any of the options highlighted in orange. The options highlighted in orange each end the quest (and resolve **Dearhenna's Journal**), but in different ways.

If you say "All right, we're even," then Cynthia pays you the fee you're owed (around 100 orens) and teleports away with the artifact. The quest automatically resolves and you get 500 XP. If you make this decision, it automatically resolves **Dearhenna's Journal** but will not trigger the quest **A Tome Truly Rare**. You're finished here and should begin the next side quest.

If you say "I can't let you leave with that thing," then you end up fighting Adalbert and Cynthia for possession of the artifact. This is effectively a battle against four mages at once, which is going to be challenging. Fortunately, this is a large room so you've got space to maneuver. Focus on eliminating Cynthia first, then Adalbert and his two duplicates. If you have Aard III or are an alchemist with Zerrikanian suns, you can stun the mages to get around their Quens. You can eliminate them rapidly with a handful of blows each, or even quicker if you trigger finishers or instant kills. Loot Cynthia's body to receive Dearhenna's notes (IV) and the book *Bane of the Vrans*, which resolves the side quest **Dearhenna's Journal** and initiates a particular version of the side quest **A Tome Truly Rare**.

After you get the loot, then you can use the artifact. You can see up to three cutscenes from a list of five involving Roche, Triss, Dandelion, Saskia, and Radovid. These cutscenes aren't essential to progressing the plot in any way, but they reveal interesting information about what other characters are doing. After the artifact runs out of power, the quest resolves and you gain 500 XP. Progress the quest **A Tome Truly Rare**.

If you say "I'd like to try the artifact," Adalbert becomes hostile and you must battle him alongside Cynthia. This battle is very similar to the other fights with mages you've already won, so fall back on similar tactics. Use Quen, roll around, and strike Adalbert when he pauses to cast a spell. Adalbert's ability to summon two duplicates of himself in combat is a complication, but not a tremendous one. Each Adalbert has relatively low vitality and is going to go down easily once you can get an attack to connect. Aard III can come in handy here, as can Zerrikanian suns for mages. It can also be useful to focus on whichever Adalbert Cynthia is attacking at the moment, so you can take advantage of any incineration effect she's inflicted. Once you defeat Adalbert and his two clones, the battle is over. Loot his body to obtain Dearhenna's notes (IV). This resolves **Dearhenna's Journal** and triggers **A Tome Truly Rare**.

A dialogue scene begins after you win the fight. Ask Cynthia all of the questions in white that you can. Asking "Will we meet again?" prompts her to mention that you can find her later at the inn. If you want to have a love scene with Cynthia, you absolutely must ask her this. After your dialogue with Cynthia concludes, you may use the artifact to contact one person. You choose from a list that includes Triss, Roche, Dandelion, Saskia, and Radovid. Each selection cues up a different cutscene that lets you know what's happening to that person. What you select doesn't affect anything but can shed an interesting light on the story's events. After you use the artifact, the quest resolves and you gain 500 XP. Cynthia teleports away. Loot Dearhenna's laboratory and the surrounding areas thoroughly before you return to Loc Muinne. Read on to proceed with **A Tome Truly Rare**.

Side Quest: A Tome Truly Rare

If you've triggered it, then how this side quest progresses depends on whether Cynthia is alive or dead. If Cynthia is alive, you know of the book *Bane of the Vrans* but do not have a copy in your possession. Go meet Cynthia at the inn and ask her about the expedition. This should open up some conversation options that directly relate to what you found completing **Dearhenna's Journal**. You want to ask her "What did Dearhenna actually research?" and "I know about the book." After that, say "Every word you say is a lie," followed by "I'm curious to know the real Cynthia." If you want to initiate the love scene with Cynthia, then select "[Embrace Cynthia]" when the option to do so comes up. You can resolve the quest successfully without sleeping with Cynthia. What's important is getting to the branch where you make the decision.

If Cynthia is dead, then you have a copy of the book *Bane of the Vrans* and must decide what to do with it. The book is encrypted, so go see Bras of Ban Ard about it. Bras offers to buy it from you, if you wish to sell it. You can also opt to hang on to it, though the quest does not resolve as long as the book is in your possession. Note that Bras of Ban Ard doesn't pay you a whole lot for the book, so selling it to him is not necessarily better than just keeping it for yourself.

Side Quest: A Score to Settle

Now you can move on to the mini-game side quests. There's no proper fist-fighting mini-game for Chapter 3, but you can wrap up some unfinished business from Chapter 2. From the inn, head north and past the harpies' spawn point toward the area where you can find Loc Muinne's dice players. The minute you enter the dice players' building, Silgrat appears and challenges you to a revenge bout. What follows from there is an ordinary fistfight, where you should really have no trouble defeating him. You don't get any orens for this final victory, but you do gain 150 XP.

Side Quest: Poker Face: Loc Muinne

With Silgrat out of the way, start playing dice. Begin by approaching the two elven players, Filly and Aylaya. You can face them in any order. After you've beaten them both, head over to the next table and challenge first Hadrian the Black, then his apprentice. With those victories under your belt, you can go back to the area just outside the inn and challenge The Incredible Lockhart. When you defeat him, you get a choice of "something nice" or 150 orens as your bonus for finishing the quest. The something nice is your choice of a diagram for making magic wraps, a runic armor enhancement, or a fire rune and an earth rune. Bear in mind that the recipe for magic wrap demands troll skin. So if you haven't been slaughtering trolls as you come across them, the diagram is basically useless to you and you should probably take the runes instead. For a player who has been going for the troll-killing achievement, the diagram of the magic wrap is by far the better prize.

Side Quest: Bring It On: Loc Muinne

For this quest, you must beat only one opponent, the Mighty Numa. Go find him and challenge him. Wager the minimum amount of orens for this first bout, because it's designed to be impossible to win. After the bout ends, you have a few options for how you can react to Mighty Numa.

You can accuse him of cheating. If you do, then this opens up a dialogue branch where you have two choices. If you say "Make my day" to Mighty Numa, it initiates a fistfight with him. He's not especially difficult to beat. After you beat him, Mighty Numa swears to stop cheating. You get 25 XP.

You can try to intimidate Mighty Numa by saying "You're not fast enough…"; Numa is usually fairly easy to intimidate, and most of the time this option is successful. Mighty Numa says he doesn't need potions to beat you and swears not to cheat the next time you arm-wrestle. You get 10 XP.

You can also simply admit "I lost." If you do things this way, then you next need to buy an Anabolic Steroids potion from Marcus. Drink it, then challenge Mighty Numa to an arm-wrestling match again while the potion is active. You should defeat him easily, so bet the full 200 orens possible so you can reap a 400-oren reward. After you beat the Mighty Numa, you get 25 XP and Numa gives you the diagram for the long, robust gauntlets. The quest resolves, awarding you with an additional 100 XP.

If you go to arm-wrestle Mighty Numa again after fistfighting him or intimidating him, the effects are the same as challenging him while under the influence of Anabolic Steroids. You should defeat him very easily, then get 25 XP, the diagram, and then an additional 100 XP. So overall, the most lucrative way to tackle this quest is to fistfight Mighty Numa after your first loss. The Anabolic Steroids potion is quite expensive, so not buying one maximizes your profit.

Side Quest: Mystic River

Head into the sewer entrance near Mighty Numa's area of the town square. When you pass by the initial chamber, if you have Malget's notes in your possession, a giant flaming head set into the wall begins talking to you. There's nothing you can do with this creature just now, though you'll come back to it later. Simply say "See you," and ignore it for the time being.

Take a right and you come to a tunnel where two bullvores patrol. As long as you don't let yourself get caught between the bullvores, defeating them should be simple. Adrenaline abilities are highly effective here and it's also easy to just beat them to death with strong sword attacks, provided you've got a strong defense at your disposal, like leveled-up Quen.

Once you're past the bullvores, the tunnel empties out into a dead end (the gate you passed through earlier is locked now) stuffed with treasure chests. Loot them to get an amazing array of treasure. One chest contains the diagram for the armor of Ys, and the other contains the diagram for vran armor, an armor of Ysgith, a fire rune, and the steel sword Deireadh. Note that even if you don't qualify for finishing **Mystic River** in this chapter, you can pick up the diagram for the armor of Ys.

The quest isn't finished until you've crafted the vran armor. Once you've gathered the materials needed to craft it and the whopping 2,000 orens it costs to make, just go visit any craftsman. The in-game quest text may make it sound like you need to specifically visit Bras of Ban Ard, but any craftsman will do. After you've successfully crafted the vran armor, the quest resolves. You get no XP for resolving the quest, but then again, you've now got the most powerful armor you can obtain on a standard difficulty. Equip and slot it with +2 enhancements before the next side quest.

Ysgith vs. Vran

If you carefully compare the stats of the vran armor and the armor of Ysgith, you may notice that the vran armor is really only better if you're playing as a swordsman (or perhaps an alchemist). The armor of Ysgith confers a lot of bonuses that are extremely useful to mage builds. If you're a mage Geralt, you may want to think long and hard about simply not finishing **Mystic River**, so you can keep the armor of Ysgith. A mage can finish the game just fine in an Ysgith armor slotted with +2 enhancements.

Side Quest: From a Bygone Era

You can only initiate this quest if you obtained Malget's notes in Chapter 2. If you weren't following the walkthrough closely, there's a fairly high chance that you didn't since the quest involving them doesn't trigger automatically. Just keep it in mind as something to do next time, in that case, and move on to the next side quest.

If you do have Malget's notes, go see Bras of Ban Ard. Say "I want to know everything about this manuscript." Bras quickly figures out that Malget's notes contain a password that lets you access a secret vault—but he won't tell you how to use the password for free. At this point, you come to a dialogue branch where you can opt to bribe him or use Axii on him. If Axii works, he just goes ahead and tells you how to use the password. If you bribe him, you probably need to give him at least 300 orens to get him to talk.

Either way, he explains that you don't need to know what the book actually means to use the password correctly, just which part of it must be repeated to the sentry if you want to pass. You can work this out on your own, but to state it plainly, you need to say:

1. Zi

2. Uddu-ya

3. la la

4. Gat

5. Exa

6. Nibbit

7. Kanpa

8. Gat

9. Uddi-Zi

Go to the sewers from the entrance north of town square. You should emerge with the sentry you need to speak with immediately to your right. Approach the sentry down in the tunnels and say the exact sequence of words to it. The sentry disappears and turns into a teleportation portal. If you're having a hard time finding the sentry for some reason, consult the sewers map.

On the other side is a simple puzzle you must solve to proceed through the room's door. In this room is a series of braziers. To pass through the door, you must light them all simultaneously. The problem is that lighting any one brazier causes the state of two others to "reverse." That is, if they are alight, they are extinguished, and vice versa. So to get all seven of the braziers lit up simultaneously, you need to take advantage of this property. This involves understanding the relationships among the braziers, which we'll refer to with letters to make what's going on a bit clearer.

- A reverses B and D
- B reverses E and G
- C reverses A and B
- D reverses C and F
- E reverses A and G
- F reverses C and E
- G reverses C and F

So solving the puzzle is simply a matter of taking advantage of the reversals so that you can get all seven braziers going at once. There are a lot of different ways to do it, but the sequence that uses the fewest number of moves (that we've found) is A, F, B, A. Once the room is open, you're free to enter and speak to a forbidding NPC called the Operator. You may want to pause and save your game here. Before you speak with the Operator, think carefully about where you are in your game and what you want to do.

You can use the Operator to respec your Geralt build if you aren't happy with it, or you can attempt to fight the Operator to obtain a game-breakingly powerful weapon and some rare drops. You can also use this fight to test your build. The Operator is by far the toughest encounter in the game, and only very strong builds are going to be able to drop him. If you try fighting the Operator and can't get his vitality below 50 percent no matter what you try, then your build is weak and you should probably respec.

You can only speak to the Operator once. If you attempt to leave during that conversation, he disappears and you can never re-enter this area. So before you speak to the Operator, take a look at where you are in the game. If you're positive you want to reset your skills, you can go ahead and speak with him regardless of level. If you're interested in fighting him, make sure you're fully prepared for the battle.

Visit craftsmen to make any traps you might want to use (notably, the Talgar winter). Make sure you have ingredients on hand for any potions you want to drink or bombs you want to make. You should be armed with the forgotten vran sword and Deithwen, wearing either vran armor or (if you're a mage) armor of Ysgith. All of your equipment should be fully slotted. You should be at level 35, so Geralt has every skill and stat bonus possible. You may want to skip ahead and complete **The Gargoyle Contract** so you can pick up the Elder Blood items, which can boost your armor and resistances a bit further.

If you want to get the Operator to respec you, say "What does this artifact do anyway?" and then "Yeah. Get started." You immediately enter a meditating stance and get all of your talents back. You must still spend six on the training tree to unlock the others, but after that you can spend your talents however you wish. If you invested in some ability you really don't like or picked a skill tree you're not totally happy playing, then you can use the respec to put your points toward something different and hopefully better.

It is possible to screw yourself out of any interactions with the Operator if you say entirely the wrong things. If you say "I need to get out of here" or "What does this artifact do anyway?" followed by "No," the Operator banishes you from his hidden area and the quest automatically fails. Obviously, you don't want to do this.

If you want to fight the Operator, say either "I'm no chosen one" or "What does this artifact do anyway?" followed by "I think I can use this thing myself." You get a slightly different response for each, but either way the Operator becomes enraged and vows to kill you. Do not undertake this decision lightly. If you decide to fight the Operator, then only do it after applying your strongest potions, enhancing your sword with whetstones, and having huge stacks of the appropriate traps or bombs in hand.

The Operator begins by shooting powerful fireballs at you constantly. He can defend himself with Quen and moves too quickly for daggers to interrupt his spells. The best way to damage him is to roll up to him while he's preparing a fireball and hit him before the animation completes. You can usually get in a three-hit combo before he throws Quen up. If you corner him, he teleports away or hits you with his staff, which can stun you or knock you down. The Operator's vitality regenerates at a frightening rate, so turtling isn't an option when you fight him. His only real weakness is being fairly vulnerable to incineration, so dancing stars and leveled-up Igni can be useful here.

The Operator by himself might be manageable, but there's a huge complication to the fight. When the Operator is reduced to 75 percent, 50 percent, and 25 percent HP, he summons a pair of incredibly strong gargoyles. Although the Operator is clearly a supernatural being, the game considers him human and you need to be wielding a steel sword to do optimal damage to him. The gargoyles he summons are ridiculously powerful, though, and can batter your Quen down in no time. You can't afford to attack them with anything but an optimal silver sword like Deithwen, since they do so much damage they can easily kill you in one or two hits on all but the lowest difficulties.

Defeating the gargoyles quickly and efficiently is the key to winning this battle. There are a few ways to go about it, but they all amount to the same basic idea: Get rid of the gargoyles fast, then go back to hitting the Operator before his vitality has time to significantly regenerate.

One way is to rely heavily on your adrenaline effects. You should be at level 35 before even thinking about fighting the Operator, so you should have your skill tree's adrenaline skill at least unlocked and hopefully boosted. For this method, you immediately blow your adrenaline effect the moment the gargoyles appear so you can kill them quickly (possibly instantly), then get back to battling the Operator. The danger of this method is that even if you're using equipment to boost your adrenaline regeneration, it's really hard for mage and swordsman builds to generate adrenaline quickly enough for handling all three waves of gargoyles. Alchemists can come closer to doing it, but still probably need a backup plan for dealing with wave two or three. Swordsmen and mages need a backup plan for getting through the rest of the battle.

Since adrenaline is unreliable, you can try to focus on instant kills to eliminate the gargoyles. If you go this route, optimize your equipment so that every piece of your kit possible is upping your instant kill chance. Also make sure you've taken every instant kill skill available to your skill tree. Mages don't get any such skills, so pursuing this method is probably not going to be successful. This can be a fruitful approach for alchemists or swordsmen, though, especially ones with access to Aard III.

The third and final way is to abuse the freeze critical effect. Very few things in the game let you inflict freezing on enemies, but you can do it consistently with use of the Talgar winter trap. The forgotten vran sword can also do it regularly in the hands of a swordsman or any build that has taken skills that bolster critical effects chances. Gargoyles are fully vulnerable to freezing, so at the very least the critical effect slows them. If one is frozen solid, then you only need to hit it once to shatter it. This acts as an instant kill, but depending on your build, it may be easier to trigger.

A few tactics may seem useful but actually aren't worth it. The big one is mind-controlling the gargoyles. This does get the gargoyles off of you, giving you time to recover. The problem is that you can't really damage the Operator at all while the gargoyles are beating on each other. He just stands there and keeps his Quen up until the gargoyles are back on his side. If the gargoyles turn on the Operator, they can't really damage him, either. Overall this tactic just makes the fight more frustrating.

Another tactic to avoid is hiding behind pillars. You may notice that if you stand directly behind one of the pillars, you enter a "safe spot" where the Operator's fireballs can't hit you and gargoyles can't see you. There's no really effective way to attack from behind the pillar, though, and any time you spend standing there is time the Operator spends regenerating vitality. If you try to leave the safe spot, you may find yourself quickly pinned against a wall by the gargoyles and beaten to death before you can escape. It's much safer to just keep moving around, relying on Quen or other defensive abilities to help soak up blows.

A positioning trick that is far more useful is to try to keep the gargoyles positioned between you and the Operator after they appear. It is difficult to do this consistently, but if you pull it off right, then the Operator basically smacks his gargoyles in the back with fireballs while he's trying to target you (similar to the friendly fire you sometimes have to deal with when Triss is your ally). The Operator's fireballs don't do a lot of damage to the gargoyles, but if the fireballs are hitting the gargoyles then they're not hitting you.

If you defeat the Operator, he drops the Operator's staff, dragon scales, a vran armor enhancement, and a magic wrap. Only the Operator's staff is worth it, as this weapon has a perfectly ridiculous +80 percent chance of incineration and a +10 percent chance of freeze. Using it in battle with humans is going to result in hilariously one-sided victories. You don't need anything like this to finish the game, though, and only a handful of battles with human opponents are left in the game. In short, while the Operator's staff is an amusing curio, it's not worth fighting the Operator to get. It's more of a trophy.

You can successfully resolve this quest by either getting a respec for Geralt or defeating the Operator. You must choose one or the other. If you kill the Operator, you cannot respec. If you respec, you cannot fight the Operator. Either way, you don't get any XP for resolving the quest but should be better off for having done it.

This entire quest is a reference to the classic PC game *Fallout 2*. "The Chosen One" is the name of Fallout 2's protagonist, and is implied to be the guy the Operator is actually waiting to see. Note that you have to descend into an underground vault to meet him, much like the famous Vaults of the Fallout series

Side Quest: The Gargoyle Contract

You can grab this quest off of the notice board outside the inn. As with most contract quests, the first step is researching gargoyles. You probably haven't fought them enough to pick up full knowledge, so instead pick up a copy of *Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters—Maintenance and Repair* from Felicia Cori if you haven't already. If you already have a copy of that book, read it. You may also want to pick up all four volumes of *Runes of Power* from either Bras of Ban Ard or Felicia Cori. You aren't required to buy these to complete the quest, but they contain information about a certain puzzle you must solve. This guide contains the same information you need, so if you want to save your orens, you can skip them.

The locations of the three "gargoyle courtyards" in Loc Muinne are labeled on your map. The easiest way is to start with the room to the northwest and then circle around clockwise to find the others. When you enter a gargoyle courtyard, you are immediately attacked by three to five gargoyles, just as you were when you first entered Loc Muinne along with Iorveth. Fight them using whatever tactics worked well for your build the first time.

After you defeat the gargoyles that guard the courtyard, look around the area for a stairwell leading down. At the bottom of the stairwell is an iron gate, then beyond it an underground room. The room should contain a magically locked chest, four magic runes glowing on the walls, and a podium. When you come to the podium, press the interaction button to read what it says. What you get is a snippet of poetry that acts as a code, indicating the order in which you should extinguish the runes.

You must move toward each rune and press the interaction button to extinguish it. If you extinguish them in the correct order, they remain extinguished and the chest magically unlocks. If you extinguish them in the incorrect order, then Geralt takes some damage and a random critical effect (usually bleeding, poisoning, or incineration). After that passes, you can try again.

Each room's clue is randomly selected from a list of six possibilities. If you read the *Runes of Power* books they detail 12 possible runes, but in practice the Loc Muinne rune rooms use varying combinations of only four runes: art, time, sky, and animal. Here's what each rune looks like.

Art

Time

Sky

Animal

Here are the six possible clues you can find waiting for you on the podium of any given rune room. The list isn't treated in a truly random fashion, so you won't get the same clue twice. Basically, in any given game's version of this quest, you should encounter half of these clues.

First Clue

A doe's long shadow
The moon quietly moans
It is autumn already

- Sequence: Animal, Sky, Art, Time

Second Clue

Three field mice
Dance in a circle at dusk
Stars are like grain

- Sequence: Animal, Art, Time, Sky

Third Clue

Glittering fish
Dying on a fresco
Struck by lightning

- Sequence: Animal, Time, Art, Sky

Fourth Clue

Behold the comet
It is like a wolf in times of scarceness
An evil lullaby

- Sequence: Sky, Animal, Time, Art

Fifth Clue

Divertimento!
Clouds are like bees
When bells ring

- Sequence: Art, Sky, Animal, Time

Sixth Clue

On the dark sky
The beauty of a falcon's flight
Faster and faster

- Sequence: Sky, Animal, Time, Art

You absolutely must correctly extinguish the rune sequences in the three underground chambers, or it does not count toward the completion of this quest. As long as the runes burn, the gargoyles simply respawn in each courtyard as time passes. Once you've extinguished the runes, the gargoyles cease to appear. While the exact puzzles you solve in each room will be semi-randomly generated, you do find certain treasure consistently in each room.

In the northwest room, where we advise that you begin, the locked chest contains the silver sword Addan Deith and the diagram for the Elder Blood trousers. You also obtain some interesting information about the Wild Hunt here. In a game on standard difficulty, Addan Deith is the strongest silver sword you can consistently obtain in the game in terms of pure damage. That said, Deithwen's large damage bonuses make it deal more damage in one of the game's climactic battles. You can use either sword comfortably to finish the game, but if you've already slotted Deithwen with runes, you might as well keep using it.

When you head over to the northeast room, which isn't far from the dice players' building, the locked chest consistently contains the diagram for the Elder Blood gauntlets. You face some additional challenges in successfully getting into this room to solve its puzzle.

After you've defeated the gargoyles and entered the northeast underground room, you find it's guarded by a golem. This fight is extremely dangerous, due to the small size of the underground room. It's very hard to retreat from the golem for long and very easy for the golem to kill you even on normal difficulty by just hitting you once or twice. Prepare for this battle by drinking an array of potions that supports your build and oiling your silver sword with Falka's blood or whirl to increase your damage output. If you have any adrenaline abilities available, you should definitely use them here. In particular, getting an instant kill on this golem with Combat Acumen is invaluable on higher difficulties. It may be worth your while to grind adrenaline by fighting harpies repeatedly until you have a full meter, so you can pull this trick off.

The final southeastern gargoyle courtyard must be approached carefully. It's the one you may have passed through when you entered Loc Muinne. To get back to it, remember to use the series of doors to pass around the Temerian camp, which is still a death trap for you. Once you've unlocked the room's chest, you can obtain the diagram for the Elder Blood boots and the encrypted manuscript quest item.

Once you've solved all three puzzles, go talk to Bras of Ban Ard to resolve the quest and get your reward. He gives you 200 orens in payment and you receive 150 XP. You should take some time to craft the Elder Blood items and equip them. Unless you're already using something that has really good synergy with your build (like the mage's trousers on a mage or the herbalist's gloves on an alchemist), the Elder Blood items are essentially the best boots, trousers, and gauntlets you can obtain in a game on standard difficulty.

Upon completing this quest, if you've finished every other side quest in the game that involved destroying monster nests, you should unlock the Pest Control achievement. Remember that you need to turn the quest in to Bras of Ban Ard for it to count as completed. You also get the character attribute Arcane Knowledge for completing this quest.

Side Quest: An Encrypted Manuscript

This quest can be extremely devious, although it's a bit of a footnote if you already have the forgotten vran sword. To initiate it, talk to Bras of Ban Ard after you obtain the encrypted manuscript during **The Gargoyle Contract**. He says that the book is sealed by a powerful magical spell that he can only break if you bring him a bunch of very specific alchemy items. What makes this quest so tricky is that you cannot go out and obtain some of these materials during this chapter.

To cast the spell that decrypts the manuscript, Bras of Ban Ard needs one warrior nekker blood, one queen endrega's pheromones, one bullvore brain, and one harpy's egg or rotfiend tongue. You had a chance to obtain warrior nekker blood any time you previously fought warrior nekkers and should have at least one by now. You pick up a bullvore brain every time you kill a bullvore, so unless you sold or used up all of yours, you should have one. You can grind harpies in this chapter to get the harpy's egg if necessary and may have a rotfiend tongue on hand. Depending on how you completed **The Secrets of Loc Muinne** earlier, you may have battled a queen endrega and obtained queen endrega pheromones.

If you have all four of the required items, bring them to Bras of Ban Ard and he can automatically decrypt the manuscript. From it Bras extracts the diagram for Caerme, which allows you to make the chapter's second most powerful steel sword. If you missed the forgotten vran sword earlier, Caerme is definitely worth wielding. If you already have the forgotten vran sword, though, then just hang on to the diagram as a trophy and enjoy the 50 XP reward you get for decrypting the manuscript. This exhausts the chapter's side quests, so by now you should be ready to end the game.

For a Higher Cause!

Now let's go back to that choice you had to make earlier. As a refresher: To get into the Redanian dungeons where Philippa is being held, you should either cut through the sewers or get yourself arrested.

Note

After you either get arrested or go through the sewers to enter the prisons, you face an important decision there. You must choose either to rescue Triss from the Nilfgaardian camp or find a way to break Philippa's spell on Saskia. Keep in mind when you make this decision that if you don't save Triss, another character does it for you instead. If you don't break the spell controlling Saskia, then it will not happen at all.

If You Go Through The Sewers

Make your way to the sewer entrance north of the town square. Proceed through the iron gate that's near the room full of **Mystic River** loot. You may have to battle a pack of rotfiends once you've passed through. To your left will be a upraised tunnel you must climb up a wall to enter. Take a left at the end of the tunnel and head forward until you reach a chamber, where there's another tunnel you can get into by climbing. At the end of this tunnel, a stairway leads into the dungeon where Philippa Eilhart is being held. Approach it to trigger a cutscene that leads to a major decision you can make regarding where you'll go for your next main quest. If you want to lift the spell from Saskia, begin **The Spellbreaker**. If you want to save Triss, begin **Where Is Triss Merigold?**

If You Get Arrested

There are a couple of ways to get arrested. One is to head over to the dice players that the guide map instructs you to avoid. These dice players are hostile, and virtually any interaction after you've initiated a conversation with them ends with Geralt's arrest. If you play dice poker with them, then regardless of the match's outcome, you get into a fistfight and get arrested. If you tell them they stink, a fistfight ensues and you get arrested. You can back out of the conversation in the first branch after speaking with them, but this is your only chance to do so. All other options lead to the dungeon.

You can also take a stroll into the Temerian camp nearby. First, fight the two guards at the entrance. They should be relatively easy to kill. Once they're out of the way, barge right into the camp. Dodge-roll around for a bit so all the knights are pissed off and chasing you. When they catch up, just stand still and soak the damage. You won't die, but once your vitality drops past a certain point a cutscene triggers that ends with you in the dungeon.

Once in the dungeon, you're in a cell next to Philippa Eilhart. When you get a chance to talk to her, ask as many questions as you can. You can find out a lot of story information this way. After the initial dialogue sequence, let the cutscenes play out.

Eventually, King Radovid leaves you with Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen and a couple of Nilfgaardian guards. Pay careful attention during the dialogue sequences. During one of them, you have to free yourself by pressing the interaction button rapidly to fill a meter. If you fail to do this, then when Shilard orders his guards to kill you, the ensuing cutscene will actually kill you. If you set yourself free, then in the cutscene you steal a sword from a guard and then enter a brief combat sequence. Just defeat the remaining Nilfgaardian guard to move onward.

After this, you begin a final dialogue with Philippa. At the end of the dialogue, you must make a choice regarding which of two possible main quests you will pursue next. If you want to lift the spell from Saskia, read on to begin **The Spellbreaker**. If you want to save Triss, begin **Where Is Triss Merigold?**

The Spellbreaker

If you decide that Philippa is going to lift the spell on Saskia, you must first lead her away from the dungeon. At the bottom of the first stairwell, you come to a pair of Nilfgaardian guards, but Iorveth conveniently appears to dispatch them. After that, Iorveth begins leading Philippa and you are free to fight. During this sequence, you need to clear the way for Philippa and Iorveth through two chambers stuffed to the gills with rotfiends and greater rotfiends. These fights are surprisingly dangerous and you should prepare for them with potions and necrophage oil, regardless of build.

If all goes well the enemies are no harder to defeat than regular rotfiends, but an unusually high number of them spawn in an enclosed space during this sequence. If one or two get behind you, then your Quen may be battered away and most of your vitality drained before you even know what's happening. On higher difficulties, it's pretty easy for one mistake in this fight to get you killed. A good tactic for managing the crowd of rotfiends is to get one to detonate, then ignite the resulting gas cloud with Igni or a dancing star. If you get lucky with positioning this lets you set four or five of the rotfiends on fire, which means that even the rotfiend you aren't currently stabbing to death is still being damaged.

After you clear the second rotfiend chamber, you come to the stairwell that leads from the sewers to Philippa Eilhart's house. Go in ahead to clear out some monsters that are guarding the place. At the top of the stairwell is a single gargoyle that you should be able to defeat without too much difficulty. Beyond it is Philippa's main room, which is guarded by a pair of gargoyles. Prepare for this battle with potions and an appropriate sword oil, probably Falka's blood, before you enter and start the fight. The big table in the center of the room creates a very constricted space for fighting. Gargoyles spawn on either side of you, so if you go to quickly engage one, the other comes up behind you and starts punching you in the kidneys. This can rapidly batter down your Quen and then kill you, so it's better to prepare and just overkill the gargoyles to death.

After you've taken care of the gargoyles, head up the stairs to the roof of the building with Iorveth and Philippa. You get sent back downstairs to ransack Philippa's quarters for her notes. While you're there, you can also pick up some rare equipment and the dragon scales, a crafting item used in making one of the chapter's better silver swords. There may also be some random orens or other loot around. When you're done, head back up to the roof. You need to use the three diagrams outlined on the notes to figure out what order to light the ritual candles around the locked chest. The letters should be read as Roman numerals. Now you may be wondering: Which of the three diagrams is the correct one?

That's where you need to remember that Philippa Eilhart is a cold, devious woman. The game picks which diagram is the correct one for opening the chest randomly, so you need to apply brute force and try all three. If you use an incorrect sequence for lighting the candles, you take some damage and a bleeding critical effect. On the basic difficulties, this won't be lethal. On higher difficulties, you should wait for your vitality to regenerate before making another attempt.

Even once you have the correct candle sequence, Philippa's spell keeps trying to kill you. After Philippa casts the unlocking spell and the cutscenes play out, you find yourself in combat with a golem that's much tougher than the one you faced earlier. You fight the golem in a magically enclosed parallel dimension where pillars of fire periodically form and erupt upward beneath your feet. It works like the bits in the draug fight where he calls for the trebuchets, or where you play the priest leading soldiers to safety. When you see the ground beneath Geralt's feet beginning to light up, dodge-roll away. You shouldn't count on Quen to tank through the damage, because you need it up to tank through the golem's damage. Feet Work helps out a lot here, as can having up potion buffs and using Falka's blood to grind out a little more damage per blow against the golem.

Once you finally destroy the golem, you return to reality and can open the chest. Inside is Philippa Eilhart's dagger, which you can use to break the spell on Saskia later in the chapter. Obtaining this item resolves the quest and should unlock the Spellbreaker achievement. Now that you can break the spell, it's time to crash the summit.

Where Is Triss Merigold?

If you decide to go after Triss, then you grab Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen and force him to lead you into the Nilfgaardian camp. Your route goes through the sewers, but nothing too eventful happens there. The fireworks start when you enter the camp and are confronted by Renuald aep Matsen and a troop of Nilfgaardian soldiers. Geralt attempts to bargain with Fitz-Oesterlen's life, but Matsen replies by killing Fitz-Oesterlen himself with a crossbow. After that, the Nilfgaardian troops jump you. How difficult this battle is depends entirely on how well your build handles bunches of human enemies at once. If you have some reliable form of crowd control and mass damage, or at least a reliable defense like maxed-out Quen, you should weather this first battle easily.

Once you've killed the first Nilfgaardian group, take a little time to loot the camp. Shilard drops Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's second letter to the emperor. Everything else in your current area is random, but the orens at least are worth grabbing. If you check the door that leads to the next courtyard over, where Triss is held, you find it's locked. Time to go looking for the key. To begin, head into the walled area where the Nilfgaardian harpy sword waits. Grab it and any random loot in the area you want, then climb up the ladder. Atop the walls you run into a pair of Nilfgaardian crossbowmen, who should be easy to defeat. Follow the area atop the wall until you reach a point where you can jump down. Keep going until you find another area where you can leap down.

Pause before you make the jump down into the pond area. The next battle is a test of resources, so drink some potions, oil your blade with hanged man's venom, and prepare some bombs or traps of your choice. Once you descend, you are in a challenge where you must fight waves of Nilfgaardian troops who throw themselves at you at Matsen's command. You need to weather three waves of around four Nilfgaardian troops at a time. They all wear full armor and use their swords skillfully to parry your blows. You can afford to whittle them down with Riposte later on, but early in the battle you need to focus on dodge-rolling, getting cheap shots, and using your bombs and traps for crowd control. Adrenaline-based abilities can be hugely useful here.

After you've mowed down Matsen's waves of men, climb up into the courtyard where the entrance to Triss's prison is located. You have a brief dialogue with Matsen where you may say what you wish. After the dialogue ends, you must battle another wave of around four Nilfgaardians. One of them is a combat mage who is basically a toned-down Vanhemar. He uses the same combat tactics, teleporting randomly, throwing fireballs, and tossing up Quen. Pick off the mage first, then pick off the Nilfgaardian troops who are wielding only swords next. Once the mage is down, Renuald aep Matsen and his shieldmen wade into the fray.

Try to pick off the other combatants first, so you can slow down the pace of battle to deal with Matsen and his men. Use your crowd-control techniques, signs, and adrenaline abilities to try and pick off the shieldmen. Matsen has hefty vitality, but your Geralt build should be verging on the level cap by this point in the game and carrying extremely powerful equipment. Once Matsen is isolated, it's probably just a matter of time until you defeat him.

After you defeat Matsen, you can loot his body to obtain Triss's prison key, the Nilfgaardian camp key, Renuald aep Matsen's letter, and the armor of Vicovaro. You can examine the loot the other Nilfgaardians you've defeated have left behind, too. Be sure to investigate the open tent to the left of the entrance to Triss's prison cell. There you can find the diagram for Nilfgaardian falconer's gauntlets and Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's third letter to the emperor.

Now, you can go unlock Triss's cell and release her. After you do, you can have a long conversation with her about the Lodge and what's really going on with the kingslayers. When the conversation is over, you must lead her out of the camp. This is pretty simple, as you can use the Nilfgaardian camp key to pass through the door that was locked earlier.

Don't head back into the sewers; instead go unlock the door at the head of the same building where the tunnel from the sewers emerges. Simply follow your quest marker. The stairway to the sewers should be on your right. From there, just turn left and exit through the door. At this point you resolve the quest and receive a 2,500 XP reward. Triss decides to go crash the summit with you. She's going to go wait at a certain point in town and you can simply talk to her when you're ready to move on to the ending of the game. Read on.

A Summit of Mages

Enter the Dragon

To initiate **A Summit of Mages**, head to the amphitheater. You should encounter a knight from Vengerberg on the way in, which triggers a cutscene that reflects Prince Stennis's fate in your game. After the cutscene ends, go find and speak with your companion. If your companion is Iorveth, he's waiting by the doors to the amphitheater. Triss will be waiting in the alleyway where you encountered the knight.

If your companion is Triss, she needs you to take care of the guards outside the amphitheater's entrance before she can approach and the pair of you can enter the summit. If your companion is Iorveth, he's…already killed the guards himself and is just waiting for you to get done doing whatever. The rest of this quest consists of simply watching the events of the cutscene play out, but exactly what you see is determined by the decisions you've made in your game. **A Summit of Mages** resolves automatically when the cutscenes end.

You must now chase down Sile de Tansarville, who has been spirited off to her tower by the mind-controlled Saskia. The chase up the tower is a setpiece where you can minimize damage by giving yourself immunity to incineration. Dodge-rolling up the stairs helps, too. You may take a little damage, but if you're using Quen it should be extremely minor.

When you get to the top of the stairs, you face a choice. After a brief cutscene, Sile prepares to teleport away using her megascope. When she begins the teleport, it becomes clear that someone's tampered with it. You can choose to save Sile by removing the flawed diamond using an interaction prompt, or to simply let her be torn apart by doing nothing at all. Whether you save Sile or let her die has little impact on the rest of your game. If she dies, you unlock the Witchhunt achievement. If you save her, she thanks you with a very important bit of information before she teleports away, and you unlock the Sensitive Guy achievement.

After Sile departs, you begin your battle Saskia in her true form as the dragon Saesenthessis. For the first phase of the combat, you only fight the dragon's massive head and neck, smashed into the tower room where you stand. During this part of the battle, you simply need to evade its attacks, then roll up to the dragon's head to get in a quick counterattack. Keep Quen up to mitigate damage, and use any tricks that you think might be appropriate. When you get her down to about half of her vitality, she leaps off the side of the tower and flies up to its flat roof.

Follow her by climbing up to the tower roof. In this phase of the battle, you still damage her in basically the same ways. Dodge-roll to evade attacks, then try to roll in to her right or left to get in a quick blow of your sword. Don't try to score multiple hits, or you're likely to get smacked around by one of her claws or a snapping bite.

Occasionally, Saesenthessis takes to the air to attack you. She may rear up or hover in place while breathing flame at you. If you can give yourself immunity to incineration, this does no damage. Throwing up Quen is the simplest way, but alchemist builds will have more options. She may also attempt to attack you with lunging dives. To avoid these, keep an eye on her when she takes to the air and then dodge-roll either side. Sometimes she decides to attack by lashing her tail at the tower's roof. This is also something you can dodge-roll away from easily enough.

Note that you can also damage Saesenthessis with thrown daggers. If you have two points invested in the Dagger Throwing skill and a sufficiently large stack of silver throwing daggers, it is possible to kill her through thrown dagger damage. Alchemists can achieve a similar effect if they have two points of the Alchemist skill and a sufficiently large stack of a heavily damaging bomb like grapeshot. Even if you don't want to try killing her purely with thrown weapons (as it can demand a very large stack on higher difficulties), keep in mind that you can damage her with bombs or daggers while she is flying around and also when she rears up to breathe fire at you.

While Saesenthessis doesn't deal especially heavy damage per blow, she has a ton of vitality and you have to hack away at her for quite some time. If you've got some sort of strong defensive ability and optimal equipment, you should be able to survive long enough to whittle her vitality down all the way. Once you reduce her vitality to a tiny sliver of red, a cutscene begins. There are a couple of QTEs here, and you need to hit them to finish the battle. Hit the interaction button when prompted, then the strong attack button.

If your companion was Iorveth, then the rest of this quest plays out automatically. Geralt uses the dagger to remove the spell, letting Saesenthessis revert to Saskia. You can have a long conversation with her at this point if you wish, asking her various questions that reward you information about her backstory and how she fits into *The Witcher* universe. When the conversation ends, you return to the city to begin the game's brief epilogue. Saving Saskia in this way unlocks the achievement Dragonheart.

If your companion was Triss, then you face a decision here. You can slay Saesenthessis, since you know you can't break the spell, or you can walk away and simply leave her to whatever her fate might be. If you choose to kill Saesenthessis, you unlock the achievement Being Witcher George. If you simply walk away and leave her alive, you unlock the achievement Dragonheart. Which decision you make won't affect the rest of the game dramatically, but Triss will comment on what you did. After that, you proceed to the game's epilogue.

The quest name **Enter the Dragon** is an homage to the famous 1973 Bruce Lee film of the same name.

Epilogue (Iorveth)

The Assassins of Kings

Returning Memories

If Your Companion Is Iorveth

Iorveth helps you up as you climb back into Loc Muinne, then fills you in on what's happened in the city. Egged on by the revelations from the Nilfgaardians at the summit, the soldiers left in the city have begun a bloody pogrom against the mages who gathered in Loc Muinne. Iorveth saw Letho get Triss out of the Nilfgaardian camp, so he leads you away to meet her.

On the way to the meeting place (in the Temerian camp's former location), you have two encounters that illustrate how the city has erupted into chaos. In the first, which takes place where you met dice players earlier, you save a pair of sorceresses from some Kaedweni soldiers who are openly talking about how they're going to rape and torture them to death. In the area just beyond that, where you fought the bounty hunters, you find Nilfgaardian troops led by a combat mage. With Iorveth at your side, you should make short work of them.

When you make it to the former Temerian camp, you do find Triss with Letho. She immediately gets up and walks toward you. After a quick dialogue scene, she goes to wait with Iorveth outside the walled-in camp area. This encounter automatically resolves **Where Is Triss Merigold?** for this chapter. Skip to the Letho's Fate walkthrough that describes your upcoming encounter with Letho.

If Your Companion Is Triss

Triss helps you up as you climb back into Loc Muinne, then fills you in on what's happened in the city. Consumed by fury at the knowledge of Sile's role in the regicides, the soldiers left in the city have turned on the mages. Only the Council's re-establishment has kept it from turning into an all-out bloody pogrom against magic-users. She also mentions receiving a letter from a messenger sent by Letho, who wants to meet with Geralt one last time at the site of the former Temerian camp. Begin heading in that direction.

Along the way, you stumble across a group of Kaedweni soldiers who have captured Iorveth, who seems to have had a bad run-in with someone very powerful. If you want, you can simply leave him there by moving away from the group of soldiers at top speed. Triss follows and you move on to the encounter with Letho with this as Iorveth's apparent final fate.

If you hang around long enough or attack them, they all fight back. You should have an easy time defeating them all, between your high level and Triss's magical support. Just remember to keep Quen up so Triss doesn't set you on fire by accident. After you defeat all of the Kaedweni soldiers, one of them drops a glittering pouch. It contains Philippa Eilhart's dagger. In this case, you leave Triss behind with Iorveth. You should make your way into the now-deserted Temerian camp to confront Letho alone. Read on.

Letho's Fate

When you enter the camp, Letho begins a dialogue scene with you. During this dialogue, you have the option to ask him many different questions about his motivations and activities. Say "I chased you for many reasons" to get into the optional dialogue branches where you can ask Letho for explanations of his behavior. (The first decision, whether or not to accept his vodka, is purely for flavor.)

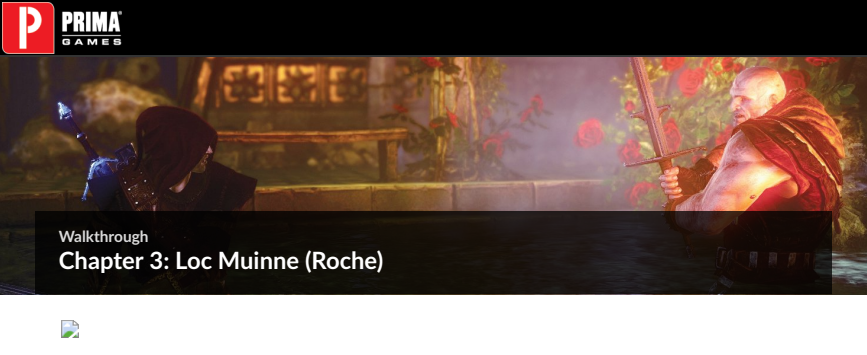
When you're ready to make the Epilogue's major decision, say "Let's finish this." At this point, you can choose to spare Letho or to kill him. The decision has no mechanical effect, as you might expect at this late date in the game. It's purely a matter of whether you want to fight him (or, perhaps, whether you're comfortable with the idea of killing him).

If you wish to spare Letho, say "Go. Somewhere far away." Letho is true to his word and simply leaves. Geralt returns to his companion (or companions) and proceeds to make his way out of Loc Muinne. The game is over, enjoy your ending. Finishing the game by sparing Letho unlocks the achievement Old Friends. By completing Chapter 3, you unlock the Once Ain't Enough achievement. By finishing the game, you unlock the achievement To Be Continued.

If you wish to fight and kill Letho, say "Give it your best shot" to initiate the fight. This battle is tough enough that you should make whatever preparations for it you deem necessary. If you want to use potions, be sure to drink them just before entering the Temerian camp and skip all of the optional question-and-answer stuff. Oil your steel sword with hanged man's venom. Letho's vulnerabilities are the same, so traps and Yrden can be very powerful here if you succeed at getting him to chase you. Letho still punishes you for getting too far away by throwing bombs, but in the wide open Temerian camp it's easier to evade and outrun his bombs. In particular, you can make good use of the pool in the middle of the square for both evading Letho and luring him into walking over any traps or Yrdens you might want to lay.

Letho's vitality is absurdly high. Chipping it down is going to take a while even with an optimal build. Letho is faster than he was in your first fight, so you may not be able to interrupt his signs with thrown daggers. Strong attacks are usually too slow in this battle, but it's easy enough to get in a couple of light attacks before you roll away from him. Having both levels of Feet Work makes this battle much easier, perhaps even more so than having a maxed out Quen to use for defense. When you get Letho's vitality down to about 25 percent, he enters a "battle fury" where he begins to use signs and bombs with much less frequency. Instead, he does his spinning attack a lot more. Keep Quen up, roll around him, and try to use light attacks to hit him a couple times.

Never go for more than a couple of blows. Even when his vitality is low, Letho is going to block you. Getting staggered usually means you get punished with counterattacks. Letho still hits like a freight train, even with your upgraded equipment and maxed-out stats. You need to be patient and careful if you want to defeat him once and for all. When you do beat Letho, you trigger a cutscene, then transition into the game's normal ending cutscenes. Killing Letho unlocks the Avenger achievement. By completing Chapter 3, you unlock the Once Ain't Enough achievement. By finishing the game, you unlock the achievement To Be Continued.



Walkthrough

Chapter 3: Loc Muinne (Roche)

For Temeria!

All roads lead to Loc Muinne now. Your first task is to find a way to get into the city, so you can track down Sile and Letho. Begin by following Roche and helping him kill harpies. These fights should be fairly trivial for you, especially if you're using the blood sword. As you work your way down the winding mountain path, you eventually come within sight of an encampment of knights from the Order of the Flaming Rose. You must pass through their camp to proceed.

Before you follow Roche in, though, take a right and head up the mountain path that leads to a dead end. There's some valuable treasure tucked away here, if you can defeat the two arachi that guard it. One spawns in front of you and the other behind you. While fighting a pair of arachas in such a narrow area would be deadly for a lower-level Geralt, you should be able to handle this quite easily. You can use Quen to mitigate an arachas's poison attack and your attacks should do tremendous damage. You can simplify the battle by dodge-rolling past one of the two arachi so one blocks the other in, though it's a matter of chance if an opportunity for this ever presents itself.

Once you've defeated the arachi, loot the area just behind them. You should find a great many orens, some random loot, and the silver sword Deithwen. While Deithwen is not the chapter's strongest silver sword in terms of pure damage, its +25 percent damage to large monsters and +25 percent damage to gargoyles come in handy.

Once you've picked up Deithwen, head back to the Order's camp and speak with one of the guards. Unless you are playing the PC version of the game and meet certain requirements (see sidebar), you are allowed to enter the camp when Roche vouches for you. Explore the camp thoroughly. You can find a significant number of training dummies here (if you still need the Experienced attribute), as well as quite a lot of random loot. You can pass freely from the camp and into the city.

For now, you need to head toward the town square. On the way, you encounter a group of Nilfgaardian bounty hunters who want to arrest you. Take advantage of your build's strengths when battling human opponents to defeat them. You probably want to prepare for this battle with potions and by oiling your sword blade if you can. This battle can be a little dangerous, mainly because there's a combat mage leading the party that's good at hitting you with fireballs while you're swordfighting the armored soldiers. If you have levels of Feet Work, try rolling around to get at the mage before picking off the knights. This approach really only works with the extra rolling speed you get from Feet Work—at default speed levels it's too hard to catch up with him.

Once you get to the town square, you can start focusing on side quests. When you get tired of side questing, return to the town square and speak to Roche to progress this quest and the other quests that relate to the main plot.

Loc Muinne

Now that you can take a breather to explore, you discover that Loc Muinne is unlike any of the prior environments you've explored in the game. It's a massive area, easily the size of both Flotsam and its surrounding forest. Parts of the city are crowded and teeming with life, while others are infested with monsters. Most of the city's points of interest are divided between the town square and amphitheater areas, with everything else often serving as hostile territory.

For PC Players

If you are playing the PC version of The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition and have imported a save from *The Witcher* where Geralt has allied with the Order, you can encounter the character Siegfried of Denesle when you enter the camp. If you have imported the correct save data for creating this scenario, you also add an additional merchant to Chapter 3, Polycarp of Rinde.

Amphitheater

The main attraction of this area is its merchants. If you spared certain characters you had the chance to spare or kill earlier in the game, you may encounter them in this area, too.

Falas

Item	Price	Item	Price
Sun Rune	376	Diagram: Yellow Meteorite Ore	239
Ysgith Rune	501	Mail Enhancement	158
Earth Rune	251	Armor Enhancement	32
Moon Rune	376	Leather Enhancement	33
Fire Rune	501	Diagram: Amethyst Armor Enhancement	201
Diamond Dust	29	Diagram: Diamond Armor Reinforcements	276
Amethyst Dust	22	Studded Leather Reinforcement	64
Cloth	20	Fibre Enhancer	33
Leather	20	Reinforced Leather Enhancement	34
Hardened Leather	26	Iron Ore	20
Studded Leather	39	Diagram: Superb Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	339
Diagram: Leather	176	Diagram: Superb Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	551
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264	Diagram: Superb Red Meteorite Silver Sword	314
Diagram: Diamond Dust	314	Koviri Sword	910
Diagram: Ceremonial Sword of Deithwen	626	Novigradan Sword	1576
Diagram: Dearg Ruadhri	1751	Superb Temerian Jackboots	698
Gynvael Aedd	1402	Superb Kaedweni Jackboots	808
Magic Wrap	235	Temerian Falconer's Gauntlets	302
Steel Plate Enhancement	65	Kaedweni Falconer's Gauntlets	577
Diagram: Blue Meteorite Ore	301	Superb Temerian Leather Breeches	426
Diagram: Red Meteorite Ore	239	Kaedweni Galligaskins	306

Falas is a craftsman and has a really good shop list, despite not being listed as a merchant in your in-game mini-map. The most notable things he sells are diagrams for the various colors of meteorite ore, a few unique weapons, some really good armor enhancers like the steel plate enhancement, and magic wraps. He also sells the diagram for the diamond armor reinforcements, which offer +2 and are relatively easy to make at this point in the game.

Ilona

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Ilona is basically a trash merchant, and not one in a convenient location for selling stuff off. The real point of interest with Ilona is her day job as the bearded she-elf. Ask her about her beard and she offers to grow it in for 200 orens. (You can pay her up to 281 orens if you want, but there's no real point to this.) After you give her the money, go talk to her again to see a truly magnificent beard.

Near the area where Ilona does business, you should find two other merchants with basically identical "trash merchant" shop lists. Both are women with randomly generated names. After you complete either the main quest **Of His Blood and Bone** or the main quest **Where Is Triss Merigold?**, these two merchants disappear. There's no particular reason to deal with these women over Ilona, who is far more entertaining.

Aryan La Valette

If you rescued Aryan La Valette earlier in your game, you can encounter him in an area just southwest of the amphitheater. You can have a conversation with him and get a little information about the summit and its importance. If you didn't save Aryan La Valette, then obviously, he doesn't appear here.

Town Square

To the east of the amphitheater lies the beating heart of Loc Muinne, such as it is. In this area you can find most of Chapter 3's best merchants, as well as the inn. To the north of the town square lie most of the NPCs who indulge in mini-games, as well as the entrance to the sewers.

Dalum

Storage

Item	Price	Item	Price
Fish	14	Potato	14
Apple	14	Cucumber	14
Old Cheese	14	Plum	14

Dalum is the owner of Loc Muinne's makeshift town inn, the Eternal Fire. Speak to him to access your storage, which really comes in handy in this part of the game. He's also a trash merchant, so he's useful for selling off stuff you decide you don't want to store.

Bras of Ban Ard

Craftsman / Dice Poker

Item	Price	Item	Price
Diagram: Zerrikanterment	501	Silver Ore	45
Sting	126	Diagram: Superb Yellow Meteorite Silver Sword	339
Armor of Tir Na Lia	3207	Diagram: Superb Blue Meteorite Silver Sword	551
Short Elven Sihil	1045	Diagram: Superb Red Meteorite Silver Sword	314
Elven Sword	1046	Koviri Sword	910
Rusty Well-Balanced Dagger	26	Novigradan Sword	1576
Well-Balanced Dagger	39	The Runes of Power I	95
Robust Well-Balanced Dagger	51	The Runes of Power II	95
Superb Well-Balanced Dagger	76	The Runes of Power III	95
Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	51	The Runes of Power IV	95
Robust Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	76	Vran Armor Enhancement	332
Superb Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	101	Magic Wrap	235
Iron Ore	20		

You can speak to Bras just outside the Eternal Flame. Bras is a craftsman and has an excellent shop list. Among his more interesting wares are the *Runes of Power* books needed to complete **The Gargoyle Contract**, the diagram for the exceptional silver sword Zerrikanterment, vran armor enhancements, and magic wraps. Look carefully at the abilities of the Zerrikanterment before you decide which silver sword you want to use through the end of the game. While there is another silver sword you can loot this chapter with better stats overall, the Zerrikanterment is about as good and may have special effects you find preferable. Bras of Ban Ard is also instrumental in two side quests, **From a Bygone Era** and **The Gargoyle Contract**.

The Incredible Lockhart

Dice Poker

Item	Price	Item	Price
The History of the Council of Mages	64	Diagram: Hardened Leather	251
The Duties and Goals of the Lodge	126	Diagram: Studded Leather	276
Formula: Tiara	84	Diagram: Elemental Stone	214
Diagram: Sun Rune	439	Diagram: Oil	126
Diagram: Ysgith Rune	439	Diagram: Leather	176
Diagram: Earth Rune	439	Diagram: Essence of Water	226
Diagram: Moon Rune	439	Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264
Diagram: Fire Rune	564	Diagram: Diamond Dust	314
Sun Rune	376	Formula: Tawny Owl	207
Ysgith Rune	501	Formula: Specter Oil	104
Earth Rune	251	Formula: Necrophage Oil	125
Moon Rune	376	Formula: Blade Oil	70
Fire Rune	501	Formula: Insectoid Oil	111
Balisse	11	Formula: Gadwall	139
White Myrtle Petals	12	Formula: Thunderbolt	125
Celandine	10	Formula: White Raffard's Decoction	97
Wolfsbane	15	Formula: Hanged Man's Venom	90
Scleroderm	14	Formula: Arachid Oil	104
Cortinarius	16	Formula: Lapwing	139
Bryonia	24	Formula: Maribor Forest	152
Mandrake Root	20	Diamond Dust	29
Verbena	24	Amethyst Dust	22
Twine	14	Cloth	20
Wolf's Aloe Leaves	126	Leather	20
Green Mold	126	Oil	14
Diagram: Solid Cloth	251	Essence of Water	14

The Incredible Lockhart sells potion formulas, alchemical ingredients, and a variety of diagrams. The best of them are probably the diagrams for the various types of runes, which are quite easy to make in this chapter of the game. Otherwise, you won't be dealing with Lockhart too often, though he does crop up in a mini-game side quest.

The Incredible Lockhart is named in honor of a character from the Harry Potter novel series, Gilderoy Lockhart.

EarSO

Craftsman

Item	Price	Item	Price
Harpy Trap	126	Phosphorescent Crystal	20
Conflagration	76	Thumper	14
Talgar Winter	76	Leather	20
Clawer	51	Timber	7
Biter	51	Endrega Hide	89
Diagram: Harpy Trap	201	Twine	14
Diagram: Conflagration	251	Grapeshot	101
Diagram: Clawer	189	Formula: Dancing Star	84
Diagram: Talgar Winter	276	Formula: Dragon's Dream	111
Diagram: Rage	251	Formula: Devil's Puffball	77
Diagram: Biter	226	Formula: Flare	35
Diagram: Well-Balanced Dagger	89	Formula: Stenchbulb	63
Diagram: Blue Meteorite Ore	301	Formula: Zerrikanian Sun	97
Rotten Meat	7	Formula: Grapeshot	70
Bauble	14	Formula: Red Haze	84
Endrega Gland Extract	14		

This silent fellow takes over Isidor Kay's role selling traps and bomb formulas, along with a few other odds and ends. If there's a trap diagram you want and haven't picked up yet, go see Earso about it. Note that Earso isn't marked on the in-game map, so consult your guide map to find him.

Felicia Cori

Barber / Dice Poker

Item	Price	Item	Price
Formula: Rook	173	Three Years Among the Endregas	64
Formula: Golden Oriole	63	Wraiths: Fear and Trembling	95
Petri's Philtre	26	Bruxae—Eulogists of Death	101
Formula: Falka's Blood	139	How to Kill a Bullvore	126
Formula: Brown Oil	125	Beings of the Element of Earth	189
Formula: Cat	70	Of Trolls and Trolling	157
Formula: Samum	104	Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters—Maintenance and Repair	126
Formula: Swallow	70	Dearhenna's Memoirs	1
Formula: Tiara	84	Formula: Tawny Owl	207
Formula: Wolf	77	Formula: Specter Oil	104
Formula: Whirl	207	Formula: Necrophage Oil	125
Formula: Brock	104	Formula: Blade Oil	70
Formula: Virga	104	Formula: Insectoid Oil	111
Formula: Stammelford's Philtre	207	Formula: Gadwall	139
Diagram: Solid Cloth	251	Formula: Thunderbolt	125
Diagram: Hardened Leather	251	Formula: White Raffard's Decoction	97
Diagram: Studded Leather	276	Formula: Hanged Man's Venom	90
Diagram: Elemental Stone	214	Formula: Arachid Oil	104
Diagram: Oil	126	Formula: Lapwing	139
Diagram: Leather	176	Formula: Maribor Forest	152
Diagram: Essence of Water	226	The Temerian Royal Dynasty	64
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264	The Viziman Uprising	64
Diagram: Diamond Dust	314	The Temerian Special Forces	64
Balisse	11	Monstrum, Or a Portrayal of Witchers	64
White Myrtle Petals	12	The Realms of the Nordlings	64
Celandine	10	The Valley of the Flowers	64
Wolfsbane	15	The Pontar Valley	64
Scleroderm	14	The Rose and the Flame	64
Cortinarius	16	The Conjunction of the Spheres	64
Bryonia	24	Vevopatis—A Forgotten God	64
Mandrake Root	20	Marshall Milan Raupenneck	64
Verbena	24	The Nilfgaardian Provinces	64
Surgical Tools	164	Diamond Dust	29
The Runes of Power I	95	Amethyst Dust	22
The Runes of Power II	95	Cloth	20
The Runes of Power III	95	Leather	20
The Runes of Power IV	95	Oil	14
The Horrors of War: Rotfiends	64	Essence of Water	14
Harpies—Daughters of the Gale	95	Essence of Death	189
The Arachas—A Study	145	Arachas Eyes	439
Drowners: A Textbook for Initiates of the Order of the Flaming Rose	32	Troll Tongue	439
Nekkers in the Mist	32		

Felicia isn't marked on the in-game map, but she's not hard to find. Her shop list isn't exactly the same as it was in Chapter 2, but it's very similar. She still sells mainly potion formulas, books, and items for crafting. She's also the hairstylist for this chapter.

Marcus

Item	Price	Item	Price
Anabolic Steroids	251	Amethyst Dust	22
Formula: Wolf	77	Balisse	11
Formula: Whirl	207	White Myrtle Petals	12
Formula: Brock	104	Celandine	10
Formula: Virga	104	Wolfsbane	15
Formula: Stammelford's Philtre	207	Scleroderm	14
Formula: Maribor Forest	152	Cortinarius	16
Formula: Tawny Owl	207	Bryonia	24
Formula: Specter Oil	104	Mandrake Root	20
Formula: Necrophage Oil	104	Verbena	24
Formula: Blade Oil	70	Twine	14
Formula: Insectoid Oil	111	Wolf's Aloe Leaves	126
Diamond Dust	29	Green Mold	126

Marcus primarily sells herbs for alchemy and some potion formulas, though he also sells blade oil formulas that can come in handy. He also sells the Anabolic Steroids potion, which you can take as part of this chapter's arm-wrestling quest. You can buy as many Anabolic Steroids potions as you want, but it doesn't do anything that's mechanically useful outside of its quest role.

Zyvik

Dutiful Zyvik can be found hanging out near Bras of Ban Ard or in the inn. You can ask him his opinions on what's happening in the city. His responses change slightly depending on if Henselt is alive or dead.

Street Preacher

Just across the street from the Eternal Flame is a street preacher who springs to life and begins haranguing the crowd whenever you pass by. This guy has nothing to do with any quests or getting loot, but you should pause and listen to his full rants once. He has two rants, both of which are too long and rambling to hear completely while you're just running around. They're pretty hilarious if you hear them in full, though, so pause if you happen to hear him saying something new while you run by.

Points of Interest

Polycarp of Rinde

Item	Price	Item	Price
Sun Rune	376	Magic Wrap	235
Ysgith Rune	501	Steel Plate Enhancement	65
Earth Rune	251	Diagram: Blue Meteorite Ore	301
Moon Rune	376	Diagram: Red Meteorite Ore	239
Fire Rune	501	Diagram: Yellow Meteorite Ore	239
Diamond Dust	29	Mail Enhancement	158
Amethyst Dust	22	Armor Enhancement	32
Cloth	20	Leather Enhancement	33
Leather	20	Diagram: Amethyst Armor Enhancement	201
Hardened Leather	26	Diagram: Diamond Armor Reinforcements	276
Studded Leather	39	Studded Leather Reinforcement	64
Diagram: Leather	176	Fibre Enhancer	33
Diagram: Amethyst Dust	264	Reinforced Leather Enhancement	34
Diagram: Diamond Dust	314	Iron Ore	20
Harvall	1470	Silver Ore	45

You may only trade with Polycarp of Rinde if you are playing the PC version of The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition and have imported a save from The Witcher where Geralt has allied with the Order. You can find him in the Order of the Flaming Rose's camp, just outside the main gates of Loc Muinne. Polycarp must be persuaded or subject to the Axii Sign Hex before he is willing to trade with you. His overall shop list is very similar to Falas's, as he specializes in selling crafting materials for making armor, runes, and armor enhancements. He also sells the steel sword Harvall, which is probably the chapter's third-best steel sword.

Harpies

There's an area to the northeast of Loc Muinne where you are attacked by harpies nearly every time you pass through. You are likely to encounter them for the first time when you go to do this chapter's **Poker Face** side quest. In terms of difficulty the encounter is trivial, but it can be really useful if you end up needing to grind money in this chapter. The harpies respawn roughly once an hour, so you can simply meditate and then go trigger the encounter if you need to grind for some fast cash.

The Right to Bear Arms (If No One Catches You)

It's safe to run around in Loc Muinne with your sword drawn provided you're not near any of the royal encampments. The various encampments are patrolled by guards, and each set of guards essentially functions as the "town guard" for that area. So if you remember to sheathe your sword when near the Nilfgaardian, Redanian, and Temerian camps, you should be okay. If you get the "sheathe your sword" warning and refuse to do so, then the guards become hostile as usual and you can fight them. Defeating them is entirely possible, but if you do you'll be asked to pay a fine in a cutscene. If you don't (or can't), then you die automatically in the next cutscene.

Side Quest: A Score to Settle

This quest triggers automatically the first time you enter the town square. Burton appears and vows to give you a proper thrashing for investigating the square coins in the previous chapter. What follows from there is an ordinary fistfight, where you should really have no trouble defeating him. You don't get any orens for this final victory, but you do gain 150 XP.

For Temeria!

With Burton defeated, seek out Roche in the town square area of Loc Muinne and speak with him. Follow him into the Redanian camp. There's some random loot you can obtain here, but nothing too interesting. For the most part, just follow Roche as he leads the way to King Radovid. During the conversation with Radovid, you can say whatever you wish. Some of Radovid's conversation options will reflect choices you've made earlier in the game, such as whether or not you killed Henselt and whether Aryan La Valette still lives.

Radovid gives Roche and Geralt some information during the talk, that Foltest's daughter Anais still lives and is being held by Dethmold at the Kaedweni camp. Radovid also makes it clear that Triss is being held in the Nilfgaardian camp. After the dialogue ends, follow Roche back into the town square. A conversation makes it clear that you face a choice, whether to rescue Triss from the Nilfgaardians or help Roche rescue Anais. You don't have to make the decision right now. You can (and should) let it wait until the end of the chapter, after you've done all of the side quests you wish to complete.

Note

Feel free to do a bit of exploring once you're in the Redanian camp. You can find some good random loot and hear some interesting things from certain NPCs. In particular, try to slip into the Redanian camp's canteen and have a talk with the man at the counter. He'll mention some amusing issues with his pants.

Caution

Be careful when exploring near the Nilfgaardian camp from this point forward. You should see Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen now standing there, speaking with the guards. If you draw too near to him, you automatically trigger the cutscenes that begin **Where Is Triss Merigold?** Once you trigger those cutscenes, you are locked into finishing that quest unless you reload.

Side Quest: Crown Witness

This side quests triggers automatically after you exit the Redanian camp. It also triggers the quest **Lilies and Vipers**, but you can't do much with this quest until **Crown Witness** is resolved in one way or another. One of Roche's agents, Brigida Papebrock, asks to be escorted out of town. You can opt to do the quest or turn Brigida down. If you turn her down, she waits by the city gates for one hour, then disappears. If this happens, you fail both **Crown Witness** and **Lilies and Vipers** and also cannot trigger the associated side quests **The Messenger** or **Pacta Sunt Servanda**.

If you accept the mission, you can opt to escort Brigida immediately or to put it off for later. There's no reason to put it off, though. When you begin to escort Brigida, you are teleported to the gates of Loc Muinne. Follow her through the Order of the Flaming Rose's camp. She opens the gate at the top part of the camp that is ordinarily impassable, letting you reach a new area.

Follow Brigida until you reach the forest, then lead the way. The forest is essentially a long, winding path forward if you check either the guide map or the map option of your menu frequently. If you try to follow the mini-map, you may get lost when passing through certain wide areas. After you've moved forward a ways, you encounter an ambush of bandits led by a combat mage. They're out to get Brigida, so the battles ahead are a little different than most that involve NPCs in this game. Brigida has a vitality bar of her own and can die if you fail to keep the enemies away from her, similar to the companions you hire in Arena mode. If she dies, then you automatically fail both **Crown Witness** and **Lilies and Vipers**, and you cannot trigger any of the associated side quests.

Fortunately, Brigida is not an especially fragile NPC. Even on Hard difficulty, it is actually difficult for her to get killed as long as you approach battles normally. If you want to be cautious about keeping Brigida alive, though, then instant kills are a preferred tactic in this fight and the others that follow it. Aard is very useful for setting instant kills up. After you've defeated the bandits, you come to an area where you must drop down a cliff to proceed. If you choose to explore the forested area behind you, you run afoul of a group of endregas.

That said, once you reach this point, you can indulge yourself in an interesting diversion. Head to the eastern side of the map and you can find a curious cave. At first, it seems to be mainly inhabited by nekkers. At the rear of the cave is a book called *Dorian's Diary*. If you pick up *Dorian's Diary* at night, then a werewolf appears immediately to battle you. Like the werewolves in Arena mode, this one has a ton of vitality but is easily locked up by hit-stun through repeated blows. Brigida can be helpful in this regard, since she'll hop in to help you with the fight. Killing the werewolf is the only way to get the rare *werewolf* trophy. Note that if you pick up *Dorian's Diary* during the day, you miss this encounter completely.

As you head toward the quest marker, you should come across another group of bandits. These bandits have set snares and attack in greater numbers. Just focus on keeping them away from Brigida and getting fast kills and you should be fine. If you take a left after this, you can find another endrega and an actual endrega nursery. You can destroy the nursery as you did the nurseries in Chapter 1 to summon a queen endrega. You should do this if you need queen endrega pheromones for the quest **An Encrypted Manuscript**.

When you arrive at the quest marker, you find that Brigida's contact is dead. You're immediately ambushed by a group of around half a dozen bandits, led by the combat mage you saw earlier. This time focus on eliminating the mage from the field, then mopping up the other soldiers. If you've handled the other battles well, then Brigida should be in no particular danger here. After the battle, a dialogue sequence begins. Whatever you say here, it ends with Brigida getting away safely after she gives you the orders changing the convoy's route. You get 250 XP at this point for resolving **Crown Witness**. Furthering the quest line involves pursuing **Lilies and Vipers**.

Side Quest: Lilies and Vipers

You need to go find Baron Kimbolt and speak to him about the fate of Foltest's children. Head back to Loc Muinne and enter the Temerian camp. Kimbolt's tent is just off to your right. Enter to trigger a cutscene. You can get a lot of information here by asking the additional questions. Regardless of what you say, you end the conversation with two options. You can take the orders changing the convoy's route to John Natalis and accuse Kimbolt, or you can take the orders to Kimbolt's scribe to have them checked for authenticity. Kimbolt offers to pay you for confirming the true source of the orders, too.

If you choose to accuse Kimbolt based on the letter, then go see John Natalis immediately and hand the letter over to him. Kimbolt is arrested, with the support of Maravel's forces. This resolves the quest immediately and nets you 250 XP. You cannot trigger the side quests **The Messenger** or **Pacta Sunt Servanda** if you take this decision.

If you choose to go see the scribe, you find him too drunk to stand. Go examine his things instead and you should find the note for scribe item. You can mix up the substance to test the letter yourself, but be careful. If you botch the test, you end up destroying the orders. To mix the substance, you select from a long list of options that appears when you approach the scribe's desk.

Before you approach the desk, scan the room. You should find the book *Invisible Ink* and eight scribe's notes on a shelf. Read *Invisible Ink* before you do anything to the orders, then read the note for scribe. This should give you an idea of what you're trying to do the orders. If you want to work out the correct method of making the invisible ink visible on your own, you can experiment on the scribe's notes. If you just want to see a list of the correct ingredients to add in the correct sequence, here it is.

- Add burnt lime to the flask.
- Add water to the flask.
- Add cormorant guano to the flask.
- Heat the flask, capture the vapors, and douse them with water.

After you finish successfully testing the letter, it turns orange. That's the wrong color for Kimbolt's secret missives, so he had nothing to do with this. The orders become a different item, the falsified orders changing the convoy's route. Go back to Kimbolt and report your findings. He pays you for your efforts and then offers you the task of finding out what the contents of Marevel's letters to the Nilfgaardian camp are. If you accept this request (and you should) it triggers the side quest **The Messenger**. If you leave Baron Kimbolt's courtyard, you automatically trigger the quest **Pacta Sunt Servanda**. You may finish either quest. You can complete the quests in any order, or choose to only complete one. These decisions affect the way the overall quest line turns out.

Side Quest: Pacta Sunt Servanda

Go see Count Maravel as the servant invited you. After the conversation, follow your quest marker to the location of the men blackmailing Baron Kimbolt. This triggers a cutscene. Toward the end of it, you must choose whether to try and defend the blackmailers or to stand aside and let Kimbolt's huntsmen do as they will. If you stand aside, the quest effectively ends here.

If you decide to protect the blackmailers, then it works like protecting Brigida did. The mercenary leader has his own vitality bar, and if it's depleted, he dies and you fail the quest. That said, the mercenary leader has a ton of vitality and you're not likely to lose him if you're capable of beating the huntsmen at all. The huntsmen are fairly typical armored sword-wielding enemies. You can take them down quickly if you have leveled-up Aard. Even Garlen, the toughest of the lot, goes down surprisingly quickly. After the battle, the mercenary leader gives you all the information you need to accuse Kimbolt. You receive 250 XP for resolving the quest.

Side Quest: The Messenger

Meet Aldrich, Kimbolt's messenger, by the fountain. He leads you to a nearby area where you see Maravel's messenger, Hieronymus Lash, walking toward the Nilfgaardian camp. Now you need to chase down Lash and get his scrolls. You first fight off Lash's two guards, who are ordinary swordsmen. After that, you chase him into a courtyard where five Nilfgaardian troops wait for you in ambush. Expect two swordsmen, one shieldman, and a couple of crossbowmen. They shouldn't be hard to defeat, but try to take them out quickly. You catch up to Lash in the next courtyard, where he fights you. He teleports like most mages, but attacks using a spell that makes fireballs erupt from the ground. It works like the draug's trebuchet fire did in the last chapter, so use the same methods to dodge it.

What's difficult is actually damaging Lash. If you simply dash or dodge-roll toward him, he always teleports away. If you fire Aard or Igni at him, he teleports away. The best way to defeat him involves a sneaky use of Yrden. Plant your Yrden sigil in a location after he teleports away from it, then dodge the firebombs until he teleports back to that spot. If you have a leveled up Yrden, you can plant sigils in multiple locations. Lash's teleportation around the area of the battle always follows a pattern, where he teleports to and from set places. If you place an Yrden sigil in a location where Lash was standing previously, he eventually comes back to it and gets stunned. Once he's stunned, you can probably take him out with a single attack combo.

Loot Lash's body after you've defeated him to get the diagram for the clawer and Count Maravel's correspondence. This gives you all the information you need to accuse Maravel. This resolves the quest and gives you 250 XP.

Side Quest: Lilies and Vipers

Once you've completed **The Messenger** and obtained Count Maravel's correspondence, you can take the letter to John Natalis and accuse Maravel. This leads to Maravel being arrested for treason. If you haven't already completed the quest **Pacta Sunt Servanda**, it automatically fails after Maravel is arrested. Visit Kimbolt to gain your reward. Kimbolt gives you 100 orens and hands over the ceremonial Ellandrian sword, and you also get 500 XP for simply resolving the quest. His dismissive attitude is probably going to leave you feeling like you've been had despite your apparent victory.

If you've completed **Pacta Sunt Servanda**, go see John Natalis. You can use the mercenary's testimony to accuse Kimbolt. This leads to Kimbolt being arrested for treason. If you haven't already completed the quest **The Messenger**, it automatically fails after Kimbolt is arrested. Visit Maravel to gain your reward. Maravel gives you 200 orens and the encrusted Nilfgaardian lawgiver, which is an excellent steel sword for builds that rely on a lot of blocking and parrying. You get 500 XP for simply resolving the quest. You may leave feeling a bit like you've been had.

Now, if you've completed both **Pacta Sunt Servanda** and **The Messenger**, go see John Natalis. Now you can choose to accuse Kimbolt, Maravel, or the both of them. Choose to accuse the both of them and Geralt puts together an accurate picture of what happened to the royal children. A very different cutscene plays out than the one you get for just accusing Kimbolt or Maravel. You don't get any equipment or orens for finishing the quest this way, but you do get 750 XP, since you actually figured out the truth this time.

Side Quest: Poker Face: Loc Muinne

Head for the remote area where the dice players gather, beyond the harpies. It's near the location of your earlier run-in with the Nilfgaardian bounty hunters. Begin by approaching the two elven players, Filly and Aylaya. You can face them in any order. After you've beaten them both, head over to the next table and challenge first Hadrian the Black, then his apprentice. With these victories under your belt, you can go back to the town square and challenge The Incredible Lockhart. When you defeat him, you get a choice of "something nice" or 150 orens as your bonus for finishing the quest. The something nice is the diagram for making magic wraps, a runic armor enhancement, or a fire rune and an earth rune. Bear in mind that the recipe for magic wrap demands troll skin. So if you haven't been slaughtering trolls as you came across them, the diagram is basically useless to you. Players on Roche's route have likely had difficulty finding runes and may want to take that over the magic wrap diagram, even if they've otherwise been slaying trolls.

Side Quest: Bring It On: Loc Muinne

For this quest, you must beat only one opponent, the Mighty Numa. Go find him and challenge him. Wager the minimum amount of orens for this first bout, because it's designed to be impossible to win. After the bout ends, you have a few options for how you can react to Mighty Numa.

You can accuse him of cheating. If you do, then this opens up a dialogue branch where you have two choices. If you say "Make my day" to Mighty Numa, it initiates a fistfight with him. He's not especially difficult to beat. After you beat him, Mighty Numa swears to stop cheating. You get 25 XP.

You can try to intimidate Mighty Numa by saying "You're not fast enough…"; Numa is usually fairly easy to intimidate, and most of the time this option is successful. Mighty Numa says he doesn't need potions to beat you and swears not to cheat the next time you arm-wrestle. You get 10 XP.

You can also simply admit "I lost." If you do things this way, then you next need to buy an Anabolic Steroids potion from Marcus. Drink it, then challenge Mighty Numa to an arm-wrestling match again while the potion is active. You should defeat him easily, so bet the full 200 orens possible so you can reap a 400-oren reward. After you beat the Mighty Numa, you get 25 XP and Numa gives you the diagram for the long, robust gauntlets. The quest resolves, awarding you with an additional 100 XP.

If you go to arm-wrestle Mighty Numa again after fistfighting him or intimidating him, the effects are the same as challenging him while under the influence of Anabolic Steroids. You should defeat him very easily, then get 25 XP, the diagram, and then an additional 100 XP. So overall, the most lucrative way to tackle this quest is to fistfight Mighty Numa after your first loss. The Anabolic Steroids potion is quite expensive, so not buying one maximizes your profit.

Side Quest: Mystic River

Head into the sewer entrance near the Mighty Numa's area of the town square. When you pass by the initial chamber, if you have Malget's notes in your possession, a giant flaming head set into the wall begins talking to you. There's nothing you can do with this creature just now, though you'll come back to it later. Simply say "See you," and ignore it for the time being.

Take a right and you come to a tunnel where two bullvores patrol. As long as you don't let yourself get caught between the bullvores, defeating them should be simple. Adrenaline abilities are highly effective here and it's also easy to just beat them to death with strong sword strokes, provided you've got a strong defense at your disposal, like leveled-up Quen.

Once you're past the bullvores, the tunnel empties out into a dead end (the gate you passed through earlier is locked now) stuffed with treasure chests. Loot them to get an amazing array of treasure. One chest contains the diagram for the armor of Ys, and the other contains the diagram for vran armor, an armor of Ysgith, a fire rune, and the steel sword Deireadh.

The quest isn't finished until you've crafted the vran armor (so if you don't want to use it, you may just want to skip this). Once you've gathered the materials needed to craft it and the whopping 2,000 orens it costs to make, just go visit any craftsman. The in-game quest text may make it sound like you need to specifically visit Bras of Ban Ard, but any craftsman will do. After you've successfully crafted the vran armor, the quest resolves. You get no XP for resolving the quest, but then again, you've now got the most powerful armor you can obtain on a standard difficulty. Equip and slot it with +2 enhancements before the next side quest.

Ysgith vs. Vran

If you carefully compare the stats of the vran armor and the armor of Ysgith, you may notice that the vran armor is really only better if you're playing as a swordsman (or perhaps an alchemist). The armor of Ysgith confers a lot of bonuses that are extremely useful to mage builds. If you're a mage Geralt, you may want to think long and hard about simply not finishing Mystic River, so you can keep the armor of Ysgith. A mage can finish the game just fine in an Ysgith armor slotted with +2 enhancements.

Side Quest: From a Bygone Era

You can only initiate this quest if you obtained Malget's notes in Chapter 2 and kept them instead of selling them to Dethmold. You need to take Malget's notes and go speak to Bras of Ban Ard. Say "I want to know everything about this manuscript." Bras quickly figures out that Malget's notes contain a password that lets you access a secret vault—but he won't tell you how to use the password for free. At this point, you come to a dialogue branch where you can opt to bribe him or use Axii on him. If Axii works, he just goes ahead and tells you how to use the password. If you bribe him, you probably need to give him at least 300 orens to get him to talk. Note that if Axii fails against Bras, you can try it again by refusing to pay the bribe and just restarting the conversation.

Once you get Bras to talk, he explains that you don't need to know what the book actually means to use the password correctly, just which part of it must be repeated to the sentry if you want to pass. You can work this out on your own, but to state it plainly, you need to say:

1. Zi

2. Uddu-ya

3. la la

4. Gat

5. Exa

6. Nibbit

7. Kanpa

8. Gat

9. Uddi-Zi

Go to the sentry down in the sewer tunnels and say this exact sequence of words to it. The sentry disappears and turns into a teleportation portal. If you're having a hard time finding the sentry for some reason, consult the sewers map. On the other side is a simple puzzle you must solve to proceed through the room's door.

In this room is a series of braziers. To pass through the door, you must light them all simultaneously. The problem is that lighting any one brazier causes the state of two others to "reverse." That is, if they are alight, they are extinguished, and vice versa. So to get all seven of the braziers lit up simultaneously, you need to take advantage of this property. This involves understanding the relationships among the braziers, which we'll refer to with letters to make what's going on a bit clearer.

- A reverses B and D
- B reverses E and G
- C reverses A and B
- D reverses C and F
- E reverses A and G
- F reverses C and E
- G reverses C and F

So solving the puzzle is simply a matter of taking advantage of the reversals so that you can get all seven braziers going at once. There are a lot of different ways to do it, but the sequence that uses the fewest number of moves (that we've found) is A, F, B, A. Once the door unlocks, you should save your game. Once the room is open, you're free to enter and speak to a forbidding NPC called the Operator.

Basically, you can use the Operator to respec your Geralt build if you aren't happy with it, or you can attempt to fight the Operator to obtain a powerful weapon and some rare drops. You can also use this to test how good your build is. The Operator is by far the toughest encounter in the game, and only very strong builds are going to be able to drop him. If you try fighting the Operator and can't get his vitality below 50 percent no matter what you try, then your build is weak and you should probably respec.

You can only speak to the Operator once. If you attempt to leave during that conversation, he disappears and you can never re-enter this area. So before you speak to the Operator, take a look at where you are in the game. If you're positive you want to reset your skills, you can go ahead and speak with him regardless of level. If you're interested in fighting him, make sure you're fully prepared for the battle.

Visit craftsmen to make any traps you might want to use (notably, the Talgar winter). Make sure you have ingredients on hand for any potions you want to drink or bombs you want to make. The best steel sword to take into battle against the Operator is the forgotten vran sword, which you can only obtain by completing the main quest **Of His Blood and Bone**.

You also want to wield Deithwen, wear a complete Elder Blood set or its equivalent, and wear vran armor or (if you're a mage) armor of Ysgith. All of your equipment should be fully slotted. You should be at level 35, so Geralt has every skill and stat bonus possible. If you feel Geralt's level is too low, go complete any side quests you haven't bothered with or advance the main plot. You can attempt to defeat the Operator at any time before you initiate the main quest **A Summit of Mages**.

If you want to get the Operator to respec you, say "What does this artifact do anyway?" and then "Yeah. Get started." You immediately enter a meditating stance and get all of your talents back. You must still spend six on the training tree to unlock the others, but after that you can spend your talents however you wish. If you invested in some ability you really don't like or picked a skill tree you're not totally happy playing, then you can use the respec to put your points toward something different and hopefully better.

Caution

It is possible to screw yourself out of any interactions with the Operator if you say entirely the wrong things. If you say "I need to get out of here" or "What does this artifact do anyway?" followed by "No," the Operator banishes you from his hidden area and the quest automatically fails. Obviously, you don't want to do this.

If you want to fight the Operator, say either "I'm no chosen one" or "What does this artifact do anyway?" followed by "I think I can use this thing myself." You get a slightly different response for each, but either way the Operator becomes enraged and vows to kill you. Do not undertake this decision lightly. If you decide to fight the Operator, then only do it after applying your strongest potions, enhancing your sword with whetstones, and having huge stacks of the appropriate traps or bombs in hand.

The Operator begins by shooting powerful fireballs at you constantly. He can defend himself with Quen and moves too quickly for daggers to interrupt his spells. The best way to damage him is to roll up to him while he's preparing a fireball and hit him before the animation completes. You can usually get in a three-hit combo before he throws Quen up. If you corner him, he teleports away or hits you with his staff, which can stun you or knock you down. The Operator's vitality regenerates at a frightening rate, so turtling isn't an option when you fight him. His only real weakness is being fairly vulnerable to incineration, so dancing stars and leveled-up Igni can be useful here.

The Operator by himself might be manageable, but there's a huge complication to the fight. When the Operator is reduced to 75 percent, 50 percent, and 25 percent HP, he summons a pair of incredibly strong gargoyles. Although the Operator is clearly a supernatural being, the game considers him human and you need to be wielding a steel sword to do optimal damage to him. The gargoyles he summons are ridiculously powerful, though, and can batter your Quen down in no time. You can't afford to attack them with anything but an optimal silver sword like Deithwen, since they do so much damage they can easily kill you in one or two hits on all but the lowest difficulties.

Defeating the gargoyles quickly and efficiently is the key to winning this battle. There are a few ways to go about it, but they all amount to the same basic idea: Get rid of the gargoyles fast, then go back to hitting the Operator before his vitality has time to significantly regenerate.

One way is to rely heavily on your adrenaline effects. For this method, you immediately blow your adrenaline effect the moment the gargoyles appear so you can kill them quickly (possibly instantly), then get back to battling the Operator. The danger of this method is that even if you're using equipment to boost your adrenaline regeneration, it's really hard for mage and swordsman builds to generate adrenaline quickly enough for handling all three waves of gargoyles. Alchemists can come close to doing it, but still probably need a backup plan for dealing with wave two or three. Swordsmen and mages need a backup plan for getting through the rest of the battle.

Since adrenaline is unreliable, you can try to focus on instant kills to eliminate the gargoyles. If you go this route, optimize your equipment so that every piece of your kit possible is upping your instant kill chance. Also make sure you've taken every instant kill skill available to your skill tree. Mages don't get any such skills, so pursuing this method is probably not going to be successful. This can be a fruitful approach for alchemists or swordsmen, though, especially ones with access to Aard III.

The third and final way is to abuse the freeze critical effect. Very few things in the game let you inflict freezing on enemies, but you can do it consistently with use of the Talgar winter trap. The forgotten vran sword can also do it regularly in the hands of a swordsman, or any build that has taken skills that bolster critical effects chances. Gargoyles are fully vulnerable to freezing, so at the very least the critical effect slows them. If one is frozen solid, then you only need to hit it once to shatter it. This acts as an instant kill, but depending on your build, it may be easier to trigger.

A few tactics may seem useful but actually aren't worth it. The big one is mind-controlling the gargoyles. This does get the gargoyles off of you, giving you time to recover. The problem is that you can't really damage the Operator at all while the gargoyles are beating on each other. He just stands there and keeps his Quen up until the gargoyles are back on his side. If the gargoyles turn on the Operator, they can't really damage him, either. Overall this tactic just makes the fight more frustrating.

Another tactic to avoid is hiding behind pillars. You may notice that if you stand directly behind one of the pillars, the Operator's fireballs can't hit you and gargoyles may hesitate to attack you. Once behind the pillar, it seems like you can just throw bombs at your enemies all day and win that way. The problem is that you can't easily damage the Operator quickly enough this way to outpace his regeneration. Even if you make headway, eventually he's going to summon another wave of gargoyles. Hanging around in the areas behind the pillars tends to result in the gargoyles pinning you against a wall and beating you rapidly to death. It's much safer to just keep moving around, relying on Quen to help you soak up blows.

A positioning trick that is far more useful is to try to keep the gargoyles positioned between you and the Operator after they appear. It is difficult to do this consistently, but if you pull it off right, then the Operator basically smacks his gargoyles in the back with fireballs while he's trying to target you (similar to the friendly fire you sometimes have to deal with when Triss is your ally). The Operator's fireballs don't do a lot of damage to the gargoyles, but if the fireballs are hitting the gargoyles then they're not hitting you.

If you defeat the Operator, he drops the Operator's staff, dragon scales, a vran armor enhancement, and a magic wrap. Only the Operator's staff is worth it, as this weapon has a perfectly ridiculous +80 percent chance of incineration and a +10 percent chance of freeze. Using it in battle with humans results in hilariously one-sided victories. You don't need anything like this to finish the game, though, and only a handful of battles with human opponents are left in the game. In short, while the Operator's staff is an amusing curio, it's not worth fighting the Operator to get. It's more of a trophy.

You can successfully resolve this quest by either getting a respec for Geralt or defeating the Operator. You must choose one or the other. If you kill the Operator, you cannot respec. If you respec, you cannot fight the Operator. Either way, you don't get any XP for resolving the quest but should be better off for having done it.

This entire quest is a reference to the classic PC game *Fallout 2*. "The Chosen One" is the name of *Fallout 2*'s protagonist, and is implied to be the guy the Operator is actually waiting to see. Note that you have to descend into an underground vault to meet him, much like the famous Vaults of the *Fallout* series.

Side Quest: The Gargoyle Contract

You can grab this quest off of the notice board outside the inn. As with most contract quests, the first step is researching gargoyles. You probably haven't fought them enough to pick up full knowledge, so instead pick up a copy of *Gargoyles, Gutters, Splutters—Maintenance and Repair* from Felicia Cori if you haven't already. If you already have a copy of that book, read it. You may also want to pick up all four volumes of *Runes of Power* from either Bras of Ban Ard or Felicia Cori. You aren't required to buy these to complete the quest, but they contain information about a certain puzzle you must solve. This guide contains the same information you need, so if you want to save your orens, you can skip them.

The locations of the three "gargoyle courtyards" in Loc Muinne are labeled on your map. The easiest way is to start with the room to the northwest, near the amphitheater, and then circle around clockwise to find the others. This method also lets you obtain a very powerful piece of equipment early in the quest, so you can use it later on. When you enter a gargoyle courtyard, you are immediately attacked by three or four gargoyles. Fight them using whatever tactics work well for your build.

After you defeat the gargoyles that guard the courtyard, look around the area for a stairwell leading down. At the bottom of the stairwell is an iron gate, then beyond it an underground room. The room should contain a magically locked chest, four magic runes glowing on the walls, and a podium. When you come to the podium, press the interaction button to read what it says. What you get is a snippet of poetry that acts as a code, indicating the order in which you should extinguish the runes.

You must move toward each rune and press the interaction button to extinguish it. If you extinguish them in the correct order, they remain extinguished and the chest magically unlocks. If you extinguish them in the incorrect order, then Geralt takes some damage and a random critical effect (usually bleeding, poisoning, or incineration). After that passes, you can try again. Each room's clue is randomly selected from a list of six possibilities. If you read the *Runes of Power* books they detail 12 possible runes, but in practice the Loc Muinne rune rooms use varying combinations of only four runes: art, time, sky, and animal. Here's what each rune looks like.

Art

Time

Sky

Animal

Here are the six possible clues you can find waiting for you on the podium of any given rune room. You won't get the same clue twice. Basically, in any given game's version of this quest, you should encounter half of these clues.

First Clue

A doe's long shadow
The moon quietly moans
It is autumn already

- Sequence: Animal, Sky, Art, Time

Second Clue

Three field mice
Dance in a circle at dusk
Stars are like grain

- Sequence: Animal, Art, Time, Sky

Third Clue

Glittering fish
Dying on a fresco
Struck by lightning

- Sequence: Animal, Time, Art, Sky

Fourth Clue

Behold the comet
It is like a wolf in times of scarceness
An evil lullaby

- Sequence: Sky, Animal, Time, Art

Fifth Clue

Divertimento!
Clouds are like bees
When bells ring

- Sequence: Art, Sky, Animal, Time

Sixth Clue

On the dark sky
The beauty of a falcon's flight
Faster and faster

- Sequence: Sky, Art, Animal, Time

You absolutely must correctly extinguish the rune sequences in the three underground chambers, or it does not count toward the completion of this quest. As long as the runes burn, the gargoyles simply respawn in each courtyard as time passes. Once you've extinguished the runes, the gargoyles cease to appear. While the exact puzzles you solve in each room will be semi-randomly generated, you do find certain treasure consistently in each room.

In the northwest room, where we advise that you begin, the locked chest contains the silver sword Addan Deith and the diagram for the Elder Blood trousers. You also obtain some interesting information about the Wild Hunt here. In a game on standard difficulty, this is the strongest silver sword you can consistently obtain in the game in terms of pure damage. That said, Deithwen's large damage bonuses make it deal more damage in one of the game's climactic battles. You can use either sword comfortably to finish the game, but if you've already slotted Deithwen with runes, you might as well keep using it.

Circle around to the northeast room that's near the dice players next. After you've defeated the gargoyles and entered the northeast underground room, you find it's guarded by a golem. This fight is extremely dangerous, due to the small size of the underground room. It's very hard to retreat from the golem for long and very easy for the golem to kill you even on normal difficulty by just hitting you once or twice. Prepare for this battle by drinking an array of potions that supports your build and oiling your silver sword with Falka's blood or whirl to increase your damage output. If you have any adrenaline abilities, you should definitely use them here. When you head over to the northeast room, which isn't far from the dice players' building, the locked chest consistently contains the diagram for the Elder Blood gauntlets.

The final southeastern gargoyle courtyard must be approached carefully. To get to it, use a series of doors to pass around the Temerian camp. Once you've unlocked the room's chest, you can obtain the diagram for the Elder Blood boots and the encrypted manuscript quest item.

Once you've solved all three puzzles, go talk to Bras of Ban Ard to resolve the quest and get your reward. He gives you 200 orens in payment and you receive 150 XP. Take some time to craft the Elder Blood items and equip them. Unless you're already using something that has really good synergy with your build (like the mage's trousers on a mage or the herbalist's gloves on an alchemist), the Elder Blood items are essentially the best boots, trousers, and gauntlets you can obtain in a game on standard difficulty.

Upon completing this quest, if you've finished every other side quest in the game that involved destroying monster nests, you should unlock the Pest Control achievement. Remember that you need to turn the quest in to Bras of Ban Ard for it to count as completed. You also get the character attribute Arcane Knowledge for completing this quest.

Side Quest: An Encrypted Manuscript

Talk to Bras of Ban Ard after you obtain the encrypted manuscript during **The Gargoyle Contract**. He says that the book is sealed by a powerful magical spell that he can only break if you bring him a bunch of very specific alchemy items. What makes this quest a bit tricky is that you cannot go out and obtain most of these materials during this chapter. Most of them are rare monster drops you obtain in previous chapters. So if you skipped their relevant quests, used up these items in your own alchemy, or sold them, it is impossible to finish this quest or obtain its rewards.

To cast the spell that decrypts the manuscript, Bras of Ban Ard needs one warrior nekker blood, one queen endrega's pheromones, one bullvore brain, and one harpy's egg or rotfiend tongue. You can obtain warrior nekker blood by fighting nekkers in the wilderness cave north of town and queen endrega pheromones by summoning an endrega queen in the endrega nursery located in the wilderness. You pick up a bullvore brain every time you kill a bullvore, so unless you sold or used up all of yours, you should have one. You can grind harpies in this chapter to get the harpy's egg if necessary and may have a rotfiend tongue on hand from your many battles with them in Chapter 2.

If you have all four of the required items, bring them to Bras of Ban Ard and he can automatically decrypt the manuscript. This resolves the quest and grants you 50 XP. From the manuscript Bras extracts the diagram for Caerme, which allows you to make a powerful steel sword. You can obtain a more powerful steel sword in this chapter only by completing the quest **Of His Blood and Bone**. If you decide to rescue Triss instead by doing **Where Is Triss Merigold?**, then Caerme is the most potent steel sword you can obtain in Chapter 3. Either way, crafting Caerme is worthwhile.

For Temeria!

Now that you've cleared every side quest you're interested in, you need to decide whether you wish to help Roche rescue Anais or if you wish to rescue Triss. If you wish to rescue Triss, skip ahead to the **Where Is Triss Merigold? section**. If you wish to rescue Anais, read on.

Note that this quest doesn't actually resolve until you've made a concrete decision either way. You get exactly the same XP rewards regardless of your choice, so you shouldn't let that influence your decision.

Of His Blood and Bone

Make sure you're carrying three runes suitable for slotting into a very powerful steel sword, as you'll be obtaining one later in the quest. Meet Roche at the bottom of the sewer tunnel that's just to the left of The Incredible Lockhart, in the town square. This tunnel leads to the entrance to the Kaedweni camp, which includes a tower where Dethmold is holed up. To rescue Anais, you must bust into the tower, which means…well, beating the living hell out of the entire camp. You should go into this battle prepared for a grueling fight against a large number of human foes. Although you will soon find a better steel sword, it can be helpful to craft Caerme just to make the Kaedweins more manageable. Use whatever potions are best for your build and oil your sword with hanged man's venom. All the usual sorts of bombs and traps are useful for crowd control, too. Just make sure you bring lots of them.

Tip

If you've defeated the Operator, consider equipping the Operator's staff. Its high chance of incineration makes the ensuing battles extremely easy, since human opponents are incapacitated while incinerated.

To get through the tunnel, approach the locked gate guarded by Kaedweins. During the dialogue with the soldiers, you come to a point where you can use Axii to distract them. After the cutscene ends, the gate is unlocked and the way is opened to you. At this point **For Temeria!** successfully resolves and you receive 500 XP.

When you emerge from the sewer tunnel, a cutscene ensues. Geralt helps Roche up onto the walls surrounding the courtyard where the Kaedweins have made their camp. This is extremely important to how the rest of the fight plays out. Crossbowmen lining the walls will take potshots at Geralt until Roche dispatches them. You need to manage the location of the Kaedweni soldiers as they attack you, leading them out of dangerous areas within range of the remaining crossbowmen back into safe areas Roche has already cleared out. Before you head for the Kaedweins, duck into a walled-in alcove just to the right of where you emerge from the tunnel. A treasure chest here contains a stack of stings and some other loot.

The battle begins with waves of Kaedweni soldiers. They have unusually high vitality and hit very hard but otherwise have all the usual vulnerabilities of human opponents. You tend to fight them in groups of two or three at a time, though you can end up fighting five or six opponents at once if you move such that two waves come after you at once. Generally, every time you move a little deeper toward Dethmold's tower, a new wave of Kaedweins appears to try and stop you. Roche clears the eastern side of the camp of crossbowmen first, so try to lure Kaedweins back in that direction as they jump you. Your adrenaline abilities are extremely useful here for managing the crowd.

Keep slaughtering Kaedweins until Roche has eliminated the crossbowmen on the walls. This happens shortly after he announces that he has a crossbow and begins taking potshots at Dethmold's apprentice, who has been commanding the troops. At this point, you should have reduced the forces on the field to a trio of mercenaries with heavy shields. Lure them away from the firefight between Roche and the apprentice, then dispatch them the way you would the other Kaedweins. The mercenaries are a little tougher, but not by much. After this, you can finally get into the western half of the camp. Look around for a circle of strength and a nearby circle of life at the bottom of a stairwell. A final two mercenaries come after you, backed up by Dethmold's apprentice. Roche heads down from the battlements to assist you.

Dispatching the mercenaries is simple, but Dethmold's apprentice is another thing entirely. He casts spells quickly, so interrupting him with daggers can be quite difficult. He's also very quick to teleport away once a blow or two is landed on him. If you use light attacks, you can knock off nearly half of his vitality with a solid combo, but setting one up is difficult. Keep an eye on where the apprentice is teleporting and dodge-roll to try to get a clear shot at him while he's launching his fireball spell. A lot of opportunities will be blown by Roche beating you to the punch and hitting the apprentice for a sliver of damage, but with patience you should eventually be able to defeat the apprentice. After the apprentice is killed, the camp goes quiet. You can look around for loot, but don't expect to find much. The soldiers drop very little of interest—mostly Kaedweni swords.

Head into the tower's underground entrance. The tower holds little of interest. Don't approach Anais's magical prison, or you get damaged by the energy barrier. Head for the door set into the far side of the tower. This leads to Dethmold's bedroom, and a cutscene plays. By the end of this cutscene, Dethmold is no longer with us.

When the cutscene ends, loot Dethmold's body to get Dethmold's safe key. The safe is off to your left, behind Dethmold's desk. Open the safe to receive the forgotten vran sword, the most powerful steel sword in the game. Equip it and slot it with runes. You won't have many opportunities to use it before the game ends, but it's extremely useful when you do.

Head back out to approach Anais. Geralt and Roche have a conversation. Here, you choose between one of two different outcomes for this quest. If you simply say "Let's go" at the first branch of the conversation, then Roche sides with Radovid. This affects the content of the cutscenes in **A Summit of Mages** but nothing else about the quest. It also affects the game's Epilogue. If you take this option, then simply lead Anais out of the tower after the conversation. Outside, you meet a detachment of knights from the Order of the Flaming Rose. Lead the entire troop out of the Kaedweni camp and back to the locked gate in the sewer tunnel to end the quest. This is worth a whopping 2,500 XP and should unlock the achievement Kingmaker.

If you don't want Roche to side with Radovid, then have Geralt say "Kings don't always keep their word…" at the beginning of the conversation. This begins a sequence that lets you convince Roche to take Anais back to John Natalis instead of to Radovid. To convince Roche successfully, make sure you do not give any replies that seem to support Radovid. For instance, you can say "Stop and think—what else could you do?" at the conversation's second branch and then "Freedom comes at a price" at the third. Once Roche is swayed, head out of the tower with Roche and Anais.

Outside, you meet a detachment of knights from the Order of the Flaming Rose who clearly intend to take Anais back to Radovid. Make sure you've got the forgotten vran sword equipped and then battle the knights. They have a lot of vitality, but the forgotten vran sword's high chance of freezing should make this battle trivially easy for you. Once you've defeated the Order, take Anais back to the locked gate in the sewer tunnel you used to enter the camp. This completes the quest and grants you a 2,500 XP reward.

Where Is Triss Merigold?

If you decide to go after Triss, head to the Nilfgaardian camp. You find Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen haranguing the guards there. In a cutscene, Geralt seizes the ambassador and uses him as a hostage. After the cutscene, **For Temeria!** resolves and you receive 500 XP.

Now you can make your way directly into the Nilfgaardian camp. The fireworks start when you enter the camp and are confronted by Renuald aep Matsen and a troop of Nilfgaardian soldiers. Geralt attempts to bargain with Fitz-Oesterlen's life, but Matsen replies by killing Fitz-Oesterlen himself. After that, the Nilfgaardian troops jump you. How difficult this battle is depends entirely on how well your build handles bunches of human enemies at once. If you have some reliable form of crowd control and mass damage, or at least a reliable defense like maxed-out Quen, you should weather this first battle easily.

Tip

If you've defeated the Operator, consider equipping the Operator's staff. Its high chance of incineration makes the ensuing battles extremely easy, since human opponents are incapacitated while incinerated.

Once you've killed the first Nilfgaardian group, take a little time to loot the camp. Shilard drops Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's second letter to the emperor. Everything else in your current area is random, but the orens at least are worth grabbing. If you check the door that leads to the next courtyard over, where Triss is held, you find it's locked. Time to go looking for the key. To begin, head into the walled area where the Nilfgaardian harpy sword waits. Grab it and any random loot in the area you want, then climb up the ladder. Atop the walls you run into a pair of Nilfgaardian crossbowmen who should be easy to defeat. Follow the area atop the wall until you reach a point where you can jump down. Keep going until you find another area where you can leap down.

Pause before you make the jump down into the pond area. The next battle is a test of resources, so drink some potions, oil your blade with hanged man's venom, and prepare some bombs or traps of your choice. Once you descend, you are in a challenge where you must fight waves of Nilfgaardian troops. You need to weather three waves of around four Nilfgaardian troops at a time. They all wear full armor and use their swords skillfully to parry your blows. You can afford to whittle them down with Riposte later on, but early in the battle you need to focus on dodge-rolling, getting cheap shots, and using your bombs and traps for crowd control. Adrenaline-based abilities can be hugely useful here, especially Heliotrope.

After you've mowed down Matsen's waves of men, climb up into the courtyard where the entrance to Triss's prison is located. You have a brief dialogue with Matsen where you may say what you wish. After the dialogue ends, you must battle another wave of around four Nilfgaardians. One of them is a combat mage. He uses the same combat tactics, teleporting randomly, throwing fireballs, and tossing up Quen. Pick off the mage first, then pick off the Nilfgaardian troops who are wielding only swords next. Once the mage is down, Renuald aep Matsen and his shieldmen wade into the fray.

Try to pick off the other combatants first, so you can slow down the pace of battle to deal with Matsen and his men. Use your crowd-control techniques, signs, and adrenaline abilities to try to pick off the shieldmen. Once Matsen is isolated, it's just a matter of time until you defeat him.

After you defeat Matsen, you can loot his body to obtain Triss's prison key, the Nilfgaardian camp key, Renuald aep Matsen's letter, and the armor of Vicovaro. You can examine the loot the other Nilfgaardians you've defeated have left behind, too. Be sure to investigate the open tent to the left of the entrance to Triss's prison cell. It holds the diagram for Nilfgaardian falconer's gauntlets and Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen's third letter to the emperor.

Now go unlock Triss's cell and release her. After you do, you can have a long conversation with her about the Lodge and what's really going on with the kingslayers. When the conversation is over, you must lead her out of the camp. This is pretty simple, as you can use the Nilfgaardian camp key to pass through the door that was locked earlier.

Exit through the door that leads out of the camp and into the area where the quest began, just north of the town square. At this point you resolve the quest and receive a 2,500 XP reward. Triss decides to go crash the summit with you. She's going to go wait at a certain point in town and you can simply talk to her when you're ready to move on to the ending of the game.

A Summit of Mages

Enter the Dragon

To initiate **A Summit of Mages**, go speak with your companion, who will be standing outside the entrance to the amphitheater. Depending on which of the two main quests you chose, it may be Roche or Triss. The rest of this quest consists of simply watching the events of the cutscene play out, but exactly what you see will be influenced by the decisions you've made in your game and who your companion happens to be. The quest resolves automatically when the cutscenes end.

You must now chase down Sile de Tansarville, who has been spirited off to her tower by a dragon. If you want to use potions in this battle, pause to drink them before climbing up into the tower itself. An alchemist may be able to keep potion timers going throughout the entire sequence by skipping dialogue, but for other builds, potions are probably going to wear out shortly after you catch Sile.

The chase up the tower is a setpiece where you can minimize damage by giving yourself immunity to incineration and dodge-rolling up the stairs as much as possible. You may take a little damage, but if you're using Quen it should be extremely minor.

When you get to the top of the stairs, you face a choice. After a brief cutscene, Sile prepares to teleport away using her megascope. When she begins the teleport, it becomes clear that someone's tampered with the megascope. You can choose to save Sile by removing the flawed diamond using an interaction prompt, or to simply let her be torn apart by doing nothing at all. Whether you save Sile or let her die has little impact on the rest of your game. If she dies, you unlock the Witchhunt achievement. If you save her, she thanks you with a very important bit of information before she teleports away and you unlock the Sensitive Guy achievement.

After Sile departs, you begin your battle with the dragon Saesenthessis. For the first phase of the combat, you fight only the dragon's massive head and neck, smashed into the tower room where you stand. During this part of the battle, you simply need to evade its attacks, then roll up to the dragon's head to get in a quick counterattack. Keep Quen up to mitigate damage and use any tricks you think might be appropriate. Note that Quen prevents incineration, so as long as you have Quen up the dragon's breath cannot hurt you. When you get her down to about half of her vitality, she leaps off the side of the tower and flies up to its flat roof.

Follow her by climbing up to the tower roof. In this phase of the battle, you still damage her in basically the same ways. Dodge-roll to evade attacks, then try to roll in to her right or left to get in a quick blow of your sword. Don't try to score multiple hits, or you're likely to get smacked around by one of her claws or a snapping bite.

Occasionally, Saesenthessis takes to the air to attack you. She may rear up or hover in place while breathing flame at you. If you can give yourself immunity to incineration, this does no damage. Throwing up Quen is the simplest way, but alchemist builds will have more options. She may also attempt to attack you with lunging dives. To avoid these, keep an eye on her when she takes to the air and then dodge-roll to either side. Sometimes she decides to attack by lashing her tail at the tower's roof. This is also something you can dodge-roll away from easily enough.

Note that you can also damage Saesenthessis with thrown daggers. If you have two points invested in the Dagger Throwing skill and a sufficiently large stack of silver throwing daggers, it is possible to kill her through thrown dagger damage. Alchemists can achieve a similar effect if they have two points of the Alchemist skill and a sufficiently large stack of a heavily damaging bomb like grapeshot. Even if you don't want to try killing her purely with thrown weapons (it can demand a very large stack on higher difficulties), keep in mind that you can damage her with bombs or daggers while she is flying around and also when she rears up to breathe fire at you.

While she doesn't deal heavy damage per blow, she has a ton of vitality and you have to hack at her for some time until you can reduce it all. If you've got some sort of strong defensive ability and optimal equipment, you should survive long enough to whittle her down. Once you reduce her vitality to a tiny sliver of red, a cutscene begins. There are a couple of QTEs here, and you need to hit them to finish the battle. Hit the interaction button when prompted, then the strong attack button.

Now, you face a decision. You can slay Saesenthessis, who is clearly being magically controlled by Sile, or you can walk away and simply leave her to whatever her fate might be. If you choose to kill Saesenthessis, you unlock the achievement Being Witcher George. If you simply walk away and leave her alive, you unlock the achievement Dragonheart. Which decision you make won't affect the rest of the game dramatically, but your companion comments on what you did. After that, you proceed to the game's Epilogue.

The quest name **Enter the Dragon** is an homage to the famous 1973 Bruce Lee film of the same name.

Epilogue (Roche)

The Assassins of Kings

Returning Memories

If Your Companion Is Roche and You Sided with Radovid

Roche helps you up as you climb back into Loc Muinne, then fills you in on what's happened in the city. Egged on by the revelations from the Nilfgaardians at the summit, the soldiers left in the city have begun a bloody pogrom against the mages who gathered in Loc Muinne. During the chaos, Roche received a message from Letho, who is waiting for Geralt along with Triss at the Temerian camp.

On the way to the camp, you encounter a sorceress who has gone mad from what she's witnessed in the dice players' building. In the area just beyond that, where you fought the bounty hunters, you find a small detachment of disgruntled Temerian soldiers. They consider Roche a traitor and attack the both of you. This can be a surprisingly tough fight, so use any leftover bombs or hanged man's venom you have on hand. If you have the Operator's staff handy, equip it to make the battle trivial.

When you make it to the former Temerian camp, you do find Triss with Letho. She immediately gets up and walks toward you. After a quick dialogue scene, she goes to wait with Roche outside the walled-in camp area. This encounter automatically resolves **Where Is Triss Merigold?** for this chapter.

If Your Companion Is Roche and You Sided with Natalis

Roche helps you up as you climb back into Loc Muinne, then fills you in on what's happened in the city. Egged on by the revelations from the Nilfgaardians at the summit, the soldiers left in the city have begun a bloody pogrom against the mages who gathered in Loc Muinne. During the chaos, Roche received a message from Letho, who is waiting for Geralt along with Triss at the Temerian camp.

On the way to the camp, you encounter a sorceress that has gone mad from what she's witnessed in the dice players' building. In the area just beyond that, where you fought the bounty hunters, you now find a small detachment of knights from the Order of the Flaming Rose, supported by Redanian arbalists. They're under orders to slay Roche for his patriotic treachery in dealing with Radovid. This fight should be quite simple for you thanks to the forgotten vran sword. The knights with shields can be a bit of a pain, so try stunning them with Aard or Zerrikanian suns. If you have it, the Operator's staff can make quick work of the shieldmen.

When you make it to the former Temerian camp, you do find Triss with Letho. She immediately gets up and walks toward you. After a quick dialogue scene, she goes to wait with Roche outside the walled-in camp area. This encounter automatically resolves **Where Is Triss Merigold?** for this chapter.

If Your Companion Is Triss

Triss helps you up as you climb back into Loc Muinne, then fills you in on what's happened in the city. Consumed by fury at the knowledge of Sile's role in the regicides, the soldiers left in the city have turned on the mages. Only the Council's re-establishment has kept it from turning into an all-out bloody pogrom against magic-users. She also mentions receiving a letter from a messenger sent by Letho, who wants to meet with Geralt one last time at the site of the former Temerian camp. Begin heading in that direction.

Along the way, you stumble across a group of Kaedweni soldiers who are menacing Roche and a little girl. The girl is Anais, whom Roche went off and rescued himself while you were rescuing Triss. You should find the battle extremely easy, between your high level and having two NPC companions. Just remember to keep Quen up so Triss doesn't set you on fire by accident. Say your farewells to Roche and the princess-in-exile, then make your way into the now-deserted Temerian camp to confront Letho. Read on.

Letho's Fate

When you enter the camp, Letho begins a dialogue scene with you. During this dialogue, you have the option to ask him many different questions about his motivations and activities. Say "I chased you for many reasons" to get into the optional dialogue branches where you can ask Letho for explanations of his behavior. (The first decision, whether or not to accept his vodka, is purely for flavor.)

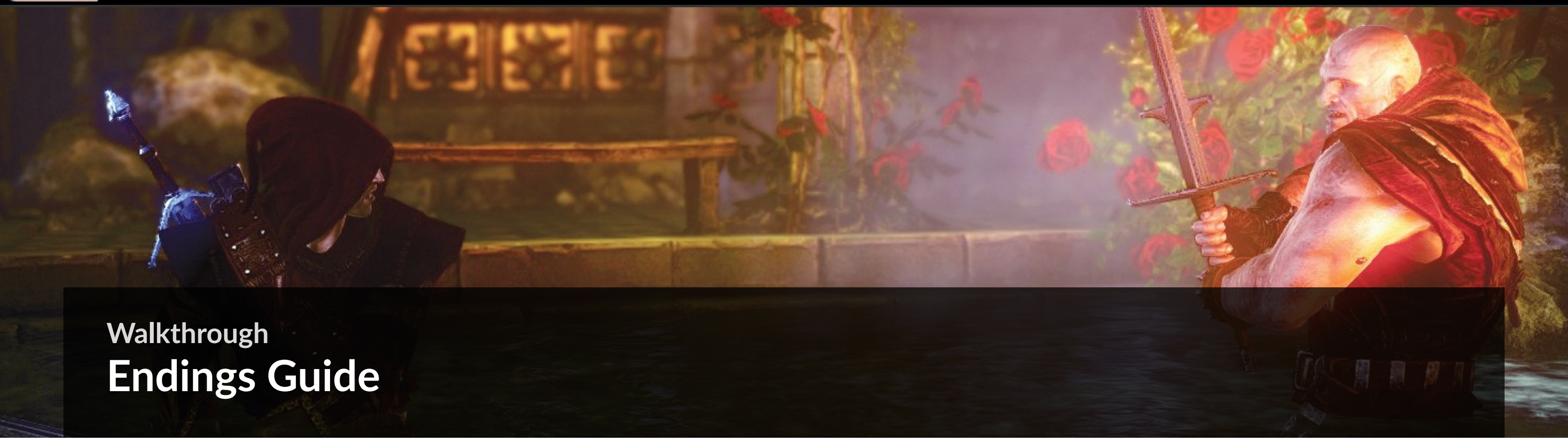
When you're ready to make the Epilogue's major decision, say "Let's finish this." At this point, you can choose to spare Letho or to kill him. The decision has no mechanical effect, as you might expect at this late date in the game. It's purely a matter of whether you want to fight him (or, perhaps, whether you're comfortable with the idea of killing him).

If you wish to spare Letho, say "Go. Somewhere far away." Letho is true to his word and simply leaves. Geralt returns to his companion (or companions) and proceeds to make his way out of Loc Muinne. The game is over, enjoy your ending. Finishing the game by sparing Letho unlocks the achievement Old Friends. By completing Chapter 3, you unlock the Once Ain't Enough achievement. By finishing the game, you unlock the achievement To Be Continued.

If you wish to fight and kill Letho, say "Give it your best shot" to initiate the fight. This battle is tough enough that you should make whatever preparations for it you deem necessary. If you want to use potions, be sure to drink them just before entering the Temerian camp and skip all of the optional question-and-answer stuff. Oil your steel sword with hanged man's venom. Letho's vulnerabilities are the same, so traps and Yrden can be very powerful here if you succeed at getting him to chase you. Letho still punishes you for getting too far away by throwing bombs, but in the wide open Temerian camp it's easier to evade and outrun his bombs. In particular, you can make good use of the pool in the middle of the square for both evading Letho and luring him into walking over any traps or Yrdens you might want to lay.

Letho's vitality is absurdly high and it's going to take a while to chip it down. Letho is if anything a little bit faster than he was in your first fight, so you may not be able to interrupt his signs with thrown daggers. Strong attacks are usually too slow in this battle, but it's easy enough to get in a couple of light attacks before you roll away from him. Having both levels of Feet Work makes this battle much easier, perhaps even more so than having a maxed out Quen for defense. When you get Letho's vitality down to about 25 percent, he enters a "battle fury" where he stops using any signs or bombs and instead just does his spinning attack nonstop. Keep Quen up, roll around him, and try to use light attacks to hit him a couple times.

Never go for more than a couple of blows. Even when his vitality is low Letho is going to block you. Getting staggered usually means you get punished with counterattacks. Letho still hits like a freight train, even with your upgraded equipment and maxed-out stats. You need to be patient and careful if you want to defeat him once and for all. When you do beat Letho, you trigger a cutscene, then transition into the game's normal ending cutscenes. Killing Letho unlocks the Avenger achievement. By completing Chapter 3, you unlock the Once Ain't Enough achievement. By finishing the game, you unlock the achievement To Be Continued. See the Endings Guide section for more information about the game's various endings.



Walkthrough

Endings Guide

The flow chart here outlines how to trigger the eight different endings of *The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings*. Each ending is a “final board” that has its own concluding cutscene. As you might imagine from looking at how the flow chart works, some endings are going to share certain similarities based on Geralt having made similar choices in them.

For that reason, we don’t recommend beating the game eight times to see all the endings (unless you just really want to do that). You can get a pretty solid idea of the game’s possibilities by getting one of the Iorveth endings, one of the Roche endings, and a Triss ending from either route. Doing things this way also lets you see all of the major quest variations and locations you can encounter throughout the game.

Let’s break the flow chart down a little bit. The first choice you can make that influences your ending is at the end of Chapter 1, when you must choose to ally with either Iorveth or Roche. The choice you make here puts you on a course to receive one of four possible endings, based on how you make the three subsequent choices that await you. The significant choices on each route are completely different.

If you ally with Iorveth, the significant choices you face are:

- Will you kill Loredo or save the elven women during the main quest **The Floating Prison** at the end of Chapter 1?
- Will you complete **The Spellbreaker** or **Where Is Triss Merigold?** at the end of Chapter 3?

Whether you kill Loredo or save the elven women forks the plot on Iorveth’s route immediately at the end of Chapter 1. Regardless of which choice you made, you must then decide whether to help Iorveth (**The Spellbreaker**) or save Triss (**Where Is Triss Merigold?**) by the end of Chapter 3. So the four possible endings to Iorveth’s route simply reflect all the possible combinations of outcomes of these two choices.

If you ally with Roche, the significant choices you face are:

- Will you permit Roche to kill Henselt during the main quest **The Siege of Vergen** at the end of Chapter 2?
- Will you complete **Of His Blood and Bone** or **Where Is Triss Merigold?** at the end of Chapter 3?
- If you choose to complete **Of His Blood and Bone**, will you allow Roche to give Anais to Radovid of Redania, or will you convince him to take her to John Natalis of Temeria?

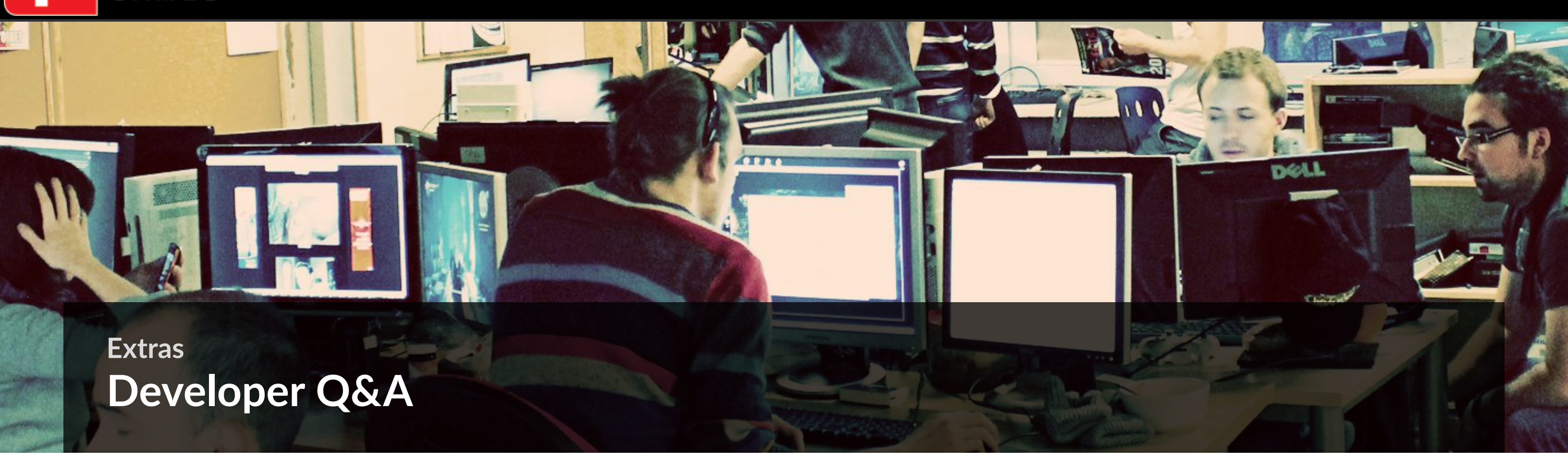
As you can see, the choices Geralt faces are a little more complex on Roche’s route. After you ally with Roche, the plot does not branch again until the end of Chapter 2, when you must decide whether Geralt will permit Roche to kill Henselt. If you then choose to ally with Triss in Chapter 3 by completing **Where Is Triss Merigold?**, whether or not Henselt is alive or dead influences your ending. If you choose to complete **Of His Blood and Bone**, then what you convince Roche to do with Anais becomes more important to determining your ending than whether or not Henselt is alive or dead. The endings for Anais going to Radovid and for her going to John Natalis are completely different.

Note

Players of the PC version should note that some decisions that were important to determining your ending in the original launch version of the game are no longer important in that particular way. Whether you spare or kill Aryan La Valette no longer has any influence on which ending you receive (though its other gameplay effects are the same). Likewise, on Iorveth’s route, whether or not you allow Prince Stennis to be lynched no longer has any influence over your ending. While whether Henselt lived or died would affect the possible outcomes with Anais in the launch version of the game, in the current version this is overridden by whether you take her to Radovid or John Natalis.

Note

Decisions that no longer affect your ending still affect other parts of the game as usual, though. If you take Anais to Radovid and Henselt is dead, then he won’t magically appear during the cutscenes that occur during **A Summit of Mages**. You’ll see a cutscene that reflects whether Henselt is alive or dead in your game. Saving Aryan La Valette still causes him to appear in Chapter 3 and still grants you the useful Strong Back attribute, as well as changing the cutscenes you see during the Prologue. And naturally, whether Stennis is alive or dead influences the cutscenes you see during **A Summit of Mages** on Iorveth’s route.



Extras

Developer Q&A

Porting a game the size of *The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings* can be an enormous task. Despite that, some key members of the *Witcher 2* production staff found a little time to answer a few questions about the game and its development. Staffers who participated in the Q&A include lead gameplay designer Mateusz Kanik, writer Artur Sliwinski, lead concept artist Bartłomiej Gaweł, designer Malgorzata Napiontek, senior writer Borys Pugacz-Muraszkiewicz, lead quest designer Konrad Tomaszkiewicz, and executive producer John Mamais. We hope this brief interview with various members of the team gives you a little more insight into what makes *The Witcher 2* such a unique, memorable game.

What's your history as a gamer? Were there any RPGs that were particularly big influences on you as a game designer?

The first real PC RPG I played was *Betrayal at Krondor. Krondor* had a great open world, a great combat system—and in those days was a really impressive game. At that time, I also started to play with friends in pen and paper RPGs like *D&D*, *Warhammer*, and *Cyberpunk 2020*. Fascination and interest in RPGs continues to this day.

If I had to list the RPGs that changed me as a game designer then I would mention *Diablo* (although this is not strictly an RPG—but there was a great randomization and itemization system), *Fallout* (for its non-linearity and character development), *Baldur's Gate* (for the translation of paper mechanics to a computer game), and *Morrowind* (for its open world and freedom).

—Mateusz Kanik, Lead Gameplay Designer

What games influenced the game design of *The Witcher 2* ? In particular, what influenced its approach to combat?

In terms of the combat system, our inspirations were actually two games: *Batman Arkham Asylum* and *Demon's Souls*. From the very beginning of work on *The Witcher 2*, we knew that we wanted to create a dynamic combat system that gives a very broad spectrum of tactical possibilities. Dynamics and the flow of combat come from *Batman*, and the tactical layer comes from *Demon's Souls*. Overall I can say that about 30 percent of the combat is inspired from other games and 70 percent is based on original ideas. We wanted to create something unique, our own, only slightly based on the best elements of the other games. I believe—in spite of some shortcomings arising from the fact that this system is created from scratch—that we have succeeded. And now we have worked out a very strong basis for development on future games.

—Mateusz Kanik, Lead Gameplay Designer

Did you consider altering or adding to Geralt's range of powers at any point during this game?

Yes, of course. But our main issue is that Geralt is a well-known character—both from Sapkowski's prose as well as from *The Witcher*. We did not want to "reset" Geralt as compared to the first part of the game, nor depart too much from the lore. Therefore, we decided to add a few elements, expanding the player capabilities, for example the addition of the Heliotrope sign.

—Mateusz Kanik, Lead Gameplay Designer

What was the inspiration for the main storyline? Is it based on anything that happens in the Witcher stories?

We always follow previous novels and stories closely and treat them as canonical. What happens to Geralt in-game is usually a logical result of some of the previous events depicted in novels. He meets old friends and enemies, visits places of importance in his world, and many people are aware of him and his previous adventures. In fact, for some, he is a walking legend.

—Artur Sliwinski, Writer

What considerations or compromises were made in translating the Witcher stories into a video game?

Our decision was simple—as little compromise as possible. Video games are a wonderful medium, and being flexible they allow for a sort of a "pioneer approach." We wanted to focus on cinema-like storytelling and provide vivid, interesting events that would be appealing for both fans of Sapkowski's prose who want to enjoy a good story and modern avid gamers who expect the best quality for their money.

—Artur Sliwinski, Writer

What parts of the game reference the original Witcher short stories and novels? Are there parts of the game that reference other fantasy series? (We caught a lot of references to *The Lord of the Rings* .)

The whole Witcher saga is an enormous homage and tongue-in-cheek reference to the fantasy genre—we just follow the original style and vision of the world with our ideas and stories. Observant players should spot those references immediately and we will not spoil the surprise here. Just keep your eyes wide open and expect the unexpected…

—Artur Sliwinski, Writer

Is the political situation depicted in *The Witcher 2* 's plot based on any sort of real world counterpart?

We try to make political plots in our game seem plausible and we wanted to depict strong, real characters who participate fully in the events of this fictional world. That's why we always look at our real world history and try to find interesting people or periods. We based political situations in *The Witcher 2* on many individual counterparts from medieval Europe, exactly as Sapkowski did in his novels, and it would be really hard to list all of them here. We can just point at the peasant rebellion that happens in our game as being based on many similar uprisings that were typical for late Middle Ages.

—Artur Sliwinski, Writer

The character designs for *The Witcher 2* are really striking. What sorts of things influenced the game's look, particularly how the characters dress?

When we created the characters for *The Witcher 2* we wanted to give an impression of a coherent world. Therefore, we started work on the characters from the careful studies on the aesthetics of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. We particularly focused on the costumes worn in Europe in those days. We went through thousands of paintings, sculptures, and photos done at events organized by people from historical reconstruction groups.

During this research attention to detail was crucial to us. We wanted to reproduce each armor and clothing piece in such a manner that we could see in the game how materials are stitched together and how armor pieces are attached to characters. Our primary aim was to create only such outfits as could exist and work in real world.

Not only design was important for us, but also the functionality resulting from specific construction of those clothes. Most of them were multipurpose. For example, leggings—the medieval equivalent of trousers, worn on cold days—were actually separate legs attached to the doublet. In warmer weather, or near a bonfire, the wearer could roll both legs down exposing bare legs. It was practical.

We also took some inspiration from modern times. For example, soldiers from Roche's special unit wear their knives attached high on their chests, and their lamellar armor resembles modern bulletproof vests.

Component characters that were built up from separate pieces in the engine were a difficult issue. Their appearance had to be consistent within their own communities and the whole world. This problem was solved by using schemes. Mages were built by combining armor pieces with jewelry, and Scoia'tael elves were mostly dressed in the remains found on battlefields, sometimes wearing something that reminds them of Dol Blathanna.

—Bartłomiej Gaweł, Lead Concept Artist

The NPCs in this game are very lively and feel more like actual people than most game NPCs, even the ones who only get to say a line or two to Geralt as he passes by. How did you approach designing the NPCs that appear in different parts of the game? How did you settle on things like the way they move and speak? How much did you consider things like historical accuracy when designing the NPCs and their world?

Communities were considered an important feature of the game. We wanted to make the player stop for a while and just watch what's happening around Geralt, so we put a lot of effort into designing the living in-game worlds. Of course, we didn't want to spoil the immersion and undermine the credibility of the world, so we paid a lot of attention to the way the NPCs look, speak, and act. We made it as coherent and believable as possible. It had to be interesting and engaging at the same time. The game is set in a fantasy world, so although the Middle Ages influence some of the designs, NPCs are purely imaginary and original but still believable, we think.

Malgorzata Napiontek, Designer

Are Iorveth and Roche characters from *The Witcher* novels, or are they modeled on any particular characters?

Sapkowski only mentions Iorveth in passing in the Witcher saga. Namely, in *Baptism of Fire* we see an elf by the name of Echel Traighlethan, a member of Iorveth's recently shattered Scoia'tael unit. Imprisoned at Drakenborg, the infamous Redanian prison-fortress, Echel was tortured and beaten by Redanian agents attempting to extract information from him. We join him on death row, awaiting execution by hanging. While the other condemned elves, half-elves, dwarves, and halflings in his cell drink watered-down wine and laugh in the face of impending death, he remains serious and calm, scratching "Freedom or death" in a wooden beam embedded in one of the cell walls.

When prison guards enter the cell at dawn (which can only mean one thing), they call Echel's name among a handful of others. They pronounce it incorrectly, and the elf calmly corrects them, stands, and lets them guide him out into the execution yard. Once outside he shakes loose of the guards' grips, and without further ado mounts the tree stump beneath his noose and tacitly lets them place the rope around his neck. "Long li--!"—his cry is cut short when a guard kicks the stump out from under him. We imagined that this kind of racial pride and devotion to a cause could only come from a highly charismatic, inspirational, and passionate leader. We saw Iorveth as someone with a deeply instilled hatred that would come through in battle as ferocity, yet out of battle would be channeled into a pragmatism that would drive him to rebuild his unit and continue the fight. By the time we meet him in *The Witcher 2*, he is battled-hardened and scarred. He also wears the badges of the commanders of nearly all the special forces of the Northern Kingdoms, having claimed their lives in battle. The one badge he lacks is that of Vernon Roche, commander of the Blue Stripes, the elf hunters of Temeria.

Roche is not mentioned in the Witcher saga, but we retroactively placed him there by making the Blue Stripes under his command responsible for shattering Iorveth's unit in the past. The rivalry between Roche and the elf began back then and continues into *The Witcher 2*. The son of a prostitute, Roche never knew his father, finding a substitute in King Foltest of Temeria. When the king is murdered, as it turns out with Scoia'tael elves aiding the assassin, Roche resolves to hunt down all involved. As commander of the Blue Stripes, he resembles Major Reisman of *Dirty Dozen* fame, who proved capable of assembling a ragtag group of military rejects and bunglers, turning them into a crack fighting force. Without a doubt, he is also a father figure to these rough-hewn men. The very image of resolve and accomplishment, he also has a softer side as demonstrated in his attitude toward Ves. So there's a general sense that this is a "good guy," someone whose moral compass is well calibrated. At the same time, he has a darker side. Much like Lieutenant Colonel Kilgore, he feels most at home on the battlefield, and if there were napalm in *The Witcher 2*, Roche would love the smell of it in the morning. But this joy of battle is tainted by racial hatred, and there's an unmistakable sense that Roche is a fallen man in more ways than one.

—Borys Pugacz-Muraszkiewicz, Senior Writer

Where did the idea of having the game change dramatically based on whom Geralt allied with come from? Did implementing this make the game more challenging to design or complete in any way?

Our most important goal is to make the most immersive, story-driven RPG games in the world. We believe that one of the most important factors for this is non-linearity. That's why we decided in *The Witcher 2* to give the player many difficult choices that have real consequences. The choice between Iorveth and Roche is the most pivotal choice in the game, and creates a major branch in the story and the player experience.

Development of non-linear games is very challenging in terms of maintaining continuity and especially testing all the possible combinations of paths through the game. It also multiplies development time and effort needed to complete the game. But we wouldn't have it any other way and will continue down this non-linear path for future titles.

—Konrad Tomaszkiewicz, Lead Quest Designer

The Red Engine that *The Witcher 2* runs on is very interesting game technology. Do you plan to license it out to other companies? Or develop some other game series with it?

Red Engine is a first-generation tech developed by CD Projekt Red specifically for *The Witcher 2*. We will certainly continue to develop it for future games at CD Projekt. We are considering licensing it, but preparing and supporting an engine as licensable middleware is a major commitment, and at the moment we are only focused on developing games.

—John Mamais, Executive Producer

Was there anything interesting you had to cut from *The Witcher 2* due to production constraints? If so, could you tell us about it?

As is always the case in game dev unless you have unlimited time and cash, you have to make some compromises, and the list is long and the decisions were difficult on *The Witcher 2*. For instance, we were developing a more robust dismemberment system and a decrafting system. Both were very cool ideas, but the risk was greater than the reward in the end. The story scope, including locations and additional characters, was also greater at the beginning, but given the non-linearity priority, we had to cut down in order to tell a more effective story.

—John Mamais, Executive Producer

Not many Xbox 360 games contain as much mature content as *The Witcher 2* . Were there concerns that content would have to be changed/deleted/altered for it to be ported to the Xbox 360?

This wasn't a concern because the ratings boards apply the same standards across platforms and we had no intent of changing the content for the console market despite the possible variances in the demographic from PC to console.

—John Mamais, Executive Producer

The Witcher franchise seems to be wildly popular throughout Europe. Do you hope to see the Witcher franchise garner this kind of popularity in the United States with the release of the Xbox 360 version of *The Witcher 2* ?

Sure, Xbox as a platform is arguably more popular in the States now than PC, so *The Witcher 2* should perform better on this platform there and as a result become a more recognizable brand. The quality of the title should bring the gamers in, and the uniqueness and depth of the Witcher universe and characters should, we hope, establish the brand in American popular culture.

—John Mamais, Executive Producer

ENTER THE DRAGON
Defeat the dragon.

Advanced

Dark Mode

Dark mode is a difficulty setting that takes hard and then kicks it up a notch. Every encounter is a challenge that requires forethought, patience, and awareness. You should save frequently and be prepared to die often. Geralt gets one extra tool to help survive this brutally dangerous version of his world: In each chapter, there is an extremely powerful set of cursed equipment that can be obtained if you're willing to invest time and effort into crafting it.

The key to surviving Dark mode is to obtain each chapter's set of equipment and to make sure you're completely prepared for every encounter. Making these preparations is easiest if you have foreknowledge of the game's challenges, so playing on Dark mode is not recommended for a player who is new to the game. Before tackling Dark mode, try beating the game on Hard difficulty at least once.

Surviving Dark Mode

Dark mode is difficult, but with the right skills, preparations, and patience, it can be overcome. Keep the following tips in mind as you play through the game. While the story events are the same as they are on lower difficulty levels, all opponents have wildly inflated stats. Essentially, every monster in the game can easily one-shot you until you've assembled a chapter's dark equipment set. Use these tips to survive longer in Dark mode:

Save. Save constantly. Save after every fight, before you begin a quest, after you finish a quest, after you do anything you don't especially want to do again. You cannot rely on the game's autosave function on Dark mode—it simply won't save your progress often enough. Danger lurks everywhere. Losing precious XP, orens, and progress because a random nekker you couldn't see hit you from behind is agony. Avoid situations like this by saving frequently.

Be prepared. Never leave towns or other safe areas without a full complement of potion buffs and appropriate sword oils applied. This is especially true during Chapter 1, before you've gotten your first dark set.

Quen is your best friend. Upgrade it early and *always* keep it up. While the other signs have their uses, they all pale in comparison to Quen.

Situational awareness is key. Never let yourself get surrounded or backed into a corner. All the potions and Quens in the world won't save you from an angry mob that you can't roll away from.

Walking is for chumps. In Dark mode, we roll. We roll all the time. They can't hit you if they can't catch you.

Don't block. The problem with blocking is that when everything kills you in a single blow, blocking just makes it so you die in two blows. Don't even bother with Parrying or related abilities. Hit once, then roll away. Roll back in. Hit once. Repeat. Only block when you have no other choice (and ideally, you always have another choice).

If it isn't nailed down, pick it up. If you are carrying too much weight and you get attacked, drop some things, kill the enemies, then loot it all again. Seriously. In this mode, you desperately need cash to afford the super-expensive dark sets. Every single oren you can scrape up by selling lousy swords, crafting materials you don't need, or spare monster guts brings you one step closer to completing a chapter's dark set.

Adapt to the dark sets. Once you have a chapter's dark set, you aren't as reliant on potions and oils (but they don't hurt). You may wish to use Cat potions to help offset the visual effects you experience when wearing a full dark set, which can make enemies difficult to see. While Cat does inflict a -10 percent damage penalty while in effect, you can offset this with the absurdly high stats of dark equipment and by oiling your blades with Falka's blood. You may also wish to complement Cat with potions that increase your vitality regeneration, like Swallow, and that increase vigor regeneration, like Tawny Owl. Sell any alchemy ingredients you know you won't use regularly for extra cash.

Keep in mind that merchant lists are semi-randomized. Sometimes if you approach a merchant who usually sells a given crafting material, it may not be in stock. Just revisit the merchant again later to see if the material is back in stock.

Caution

Keep track of which ingredients you need to create dark sets, even ones for chapters you aren't in yet. Some of the ingredients demanded for sets are somewhat rare, making them expensive to get hold of by buying them or crafting them. If you simply find them while looting a town, you can put them into storage and save yourself some headaches down the line. You definitely don't want to sell something that you may need later on.

Chapter by Chapter

The game's sequence of events in Dark mode is identical to what occurs in a game on standard difficulty. Enemies are in the same locations, unique foes behave the same way, and your quests and decisions are the same. You can consult the regular walkthrough for advice about specific quests or the consequences of certain decisions. That said, there are some specific points in the game that you want to approach differently in Dark mode. That's what this section addresses.

Always make sure you finish a chapter's dark set for a given Chapter before initiating major story-mandated battles. The added bonuses to your stats make the fights substantially easier. Remember that this is a mode where you need all of the help you can get.

Chapter 1

The Kayran

Before you battle the kayran, make sure you resolve the main quest **The Kayran: A Matter of Price** such that you receive the Haggling character attribute. Haggling reduces all shop prices by 20 percent, which amounts to an enormous discount when you're dealing with items like the dark sets that cost thousands of orens to obtain. You get Haggling by successfully using Axii during dialogue with the merchant to make him double his fee, then collecting the funds from him after you kill the kayran. Note that all prices for items listed in the Dark mode guide are default prices, before the Haggling reduction is applied.

When battling the kayran, it's important to keep moving. Always keep your camera turned so that you can see the beast's tentacles and predict where and when they will strike. Keep Quen up to absorb the punishment that follows a mistake, because even with your dark set the kayran can and will one-shot you if given the chance.

Letho

The fight against Letho can be tricky on any difficulty, but it only gets worse in Dark mode. Even with your dark set, battering down his Quen is a fruitless endeavor. He hits like a truck on standard difficulties, but now he hits like an 18-wheeler hurled at you by a troll. Letho's weaknesses are the same. He's still slightly slower than Geralt, and he's still vulnerable to Yrden and traps. It's not worth taking down Quen to use Yrden, though, so focus on traps. Keep moving so you can dodge his attacks, especially his devastating Aard.

The best way to damage Letho is to get behind him and land a light attack combo. If you get an opening, don't let up until he throws up Quen. Once he has, then dodge-roll away from him and wait for it to wear off. Getting staggered by trying to hit Letho tends to leave you open to a life-ending attack combo. If you find yourself in a corner, or unable to dodge an attack, using Aard can give you a moment to strike or escape. This is one of the few situations where it's worth using something besides Quen.

Chapter 2

Serrit and Auckes (Roche)

These assassins are quick, deadly, and swiftly parry your attacks if you face them head-on. After getting Quen up and dodging their first wave of attacks, use Axii on one of them. Wait for your new friend to grab the other assassin's attention. At that point, try to get in behind your target and strike him as many times as possible before Axii's effects wear off. Roll away from the foes and repeat the process, using Axii on one of them. Be careful while dodge-rolling during this fight, as it's easy to get stuck in a corner when you're around the tents. Try to keep the assassins out in the open where you have plenty of room to move.

Draug (Both Routes)

If you have the Chapter 2 set before you battle the draug, this fight becomes hilariously easy. Put up your Quen and wait for him to charge. Roll out of the way, then roll back in and slash at his back with your strong attack. Using this method, it's possible to take out the draug with around four blows. That said, don't get lazy in this fight. The draug can still summon trebuchet fire and hails of flaming arrows, which can be extremely deadly on this difficulty. Practice zone control and try not to be either too close or too far from the draug at any time.

Chapter 3

Saesenthessis

When fighting the dragon Saesenthessis in Síle's lab at the top of the tower, the single most important thing is to keep up Quen. Quen negates fire damage, which keeps the dragon's fiery breath from incinerating you (or damaging you at all). In fact, one of the best times to attack the dragon is while it's breathing fire. Just walk through the flames, land around three hits, then dodge-roll away before the dragon finishes its fire-breathing animation and swipes at you.

Once you climb to the top of the tower, you battle the dragon on the ground. In this round of the fight, be sure to stay directly in front of her. If you close on her from either side, she can get in a pair of quick blows where the second one always kills you even if you survive the first. Bait her into attacking you, roll in for a couple quick hits, then roll back out.

Letho

Fighting Letho during the Chapter 3 Epilogue is basically the same as fighting him during Chapter 1. His Quen can absorb even more damage now, he moves a bit faster, and his strikes deal considerably more damage. Your basic strategy should be the same. Dodge his attacks and move in behind him to strike. When he puts his Quen up, simply keep moving and dodge his attacks until it wears off. Again, using Aard can give you a momentary advantage to strike if you're cornered, but that shouldn't happen much when you fight him in a wide open area like the Temerian camp.

Build Advice

How you allocate Geralt's talents as he levels up is extremely important in Dark mode. For certain stretches of the game, you fight enemies at a profound disadvantage in terms of stats. Even with the dark sets for each chapter assembled, you need to be very careful in combat. You can't afford to invest talents in sub-optimal skills, as every point you spend is a chance to narrow the gap between Geralt's abilities and his enemies' ludicrous stats. The overall safest choices to make when playing on Dark mode are a minimal investment in the training tree, an investment in maxing out Quen, and then as many points as possible invested in the swordsmanship tree.

Finishing Dark mode as a mage or alchemist is possible, but attempting to do so increases the challenge you face. Both trees offer lower statistical bonuses than the swordsmanship tree and less immediately useful adrenaline-based abilities. The swordsmanship tree gives you access to the ability to damage multiple enemies at once, the ability to increase your damage significantly, massive damage reduction bonuses, huge boosts to resistances, and the ability to perform instant kills on groups of enemies. These powers can be very useful equalizers in Dark mode.

Here is a sample build based on the builds used to complete Dark mode here at the Prima offices. There is room to vary the build somewhat according to a player's taste, but you should stick to the basics of it as much as possible. Remember not to invest in the swordsmanship tree skills that involve blocking if at all possible. Enemies do so much damage that blocking simply isn't something you want to be doing in combat, and trying to make Geralt better at blocking is simply a waste of effort.

Dark Mode Build

Level	Skills
1	—
2	Vigor Regeneration
3	Vigor Regeneration
4	Hardiness
5	Parrying
6	Fortitude
7	Fortitude
8	Enhanced Aard Sign
9	Enhanced Quen Sign
10	Enhanced Quen Sign
11	Magical Vigor
12	Magical Vigor
13	Feet Work
14	Schemer
15	Tough Guy
16	Hardy
17	Finesse
18	Invincible
19	Combat Acumen
20	Whirlwind
21	Whirlwind
22	Combat Acumen
23	Invincible
24	Finesse
25	Hardy
26	Whirl
27	Violence
28	Violence
29	Whirl
30	Tough Guy
31	Schemer
32	Feet Work
33	Position
34	Position
35	Enhanced Aard Sign

Dark Sets

The dark sets are the main reason to play through Dark mode. The monsters may have increased stats and deadliness, but the dark sets level the playing field and sometimes can even put you on top. This much power doesn't come cheap, though. You'll have to work hard to make the money necessary to complete a set, and even then it has some drawbacks to balance out its immense power.

The items are cursed. If you so choose, you can craft individual pieces of the armor (armor, gauntlets, boots, or trousers) and equip them as you obtain them. You cannot say the same about the steel and silver swords that are part of each set. If you equip a sword from a set without having the rest of the entire set, the sword begins to drain Geralt's life. Once you have a full set, however, the swords drain vitality from your foes with every blow. This is represented by red orbs that fly out from your foes with every strike.

Unsheathing either of a dark set's swords turns Geralt's vision into "dark vision." Everything turns gray, similar to the sequence where you're reliving Auckes's memories in Chapter 2. Only the color red can be seen clearly. Shadows begin to crawl in from the sides of the screen, and an ominous growling is always audible. As befits a curse, these impressive visual effects make it pretty difficult to see your enemies clearly, especially if Geralt is in a cave or adventuring at night. You can drink Cat potions to offset the "dark vision" effect, just keep in mind that Cat reduces your damage output by 10 percent. You can take measures to counteract this, like oiling your blades with Falka's blood.

You obtain the Dark mode sets by purchasing diagrams from merchants, then forging them with the aid of a craftsman. The good news is that you can find many of the components you need for this as random loot or easily obtained monster drops. The bad news is that the dark sets are so expensive that, one way or another, you're going to end up having to grind for orens.

As you gather the items you need, be sure to put items that you know you will need in future chapters into storage first thing. This frees you up to sell everything else in your inventory without fear of accidentally selling something important.

The complete stat bonuses offered by each set are listed, along with the crafting costs involved and materials required. Note that since weapon stats are only applied when the weapon is drawn, the total statistics do not include any bonuses or abilities gained from weapons. If you want to look at the statistics of each individual piece of a given set, you can look it up in the "Items Compendium" section.

Caution

Be sure to read what future sets require before selling off materials for orens, especially rare materials like draugir armor fragments and dragon scales. You don't want to end up short one item that you can no longer find when you need it!

Chapter 1: The Blasphemer's Set

Total Passive Bonuses When Wearing Complete Set

Armor	+20
Vitality	+45
Geralt's Maximum Load	+15
Resistance to Bleeding	+55%
Resistance to Poison	+40%
Resistance to Incineration	+85%
Magic Damage Reduction	+27%
Bonus Sign Damage	+5

Grinding for Orens

One of the best ways to make money for the Blasphemer's set is to loot everything you can find during the Prologue. If you save Aryan La Valette, you can get the Strong Back attribute and raise your maximum load to 300 units. If you don't get Strong Back, then you're definitely going to be over your encumbrance limit by the time you begin Chapter 1. During the ambush sequence at the beginning of this chapter, simply drop your heaviest items so you can fight off your attackers. Once you get to the docks, return and pick up what you dropped along with the items the elves drop. If you didn't miss anything, this should give you a good head start toward acquiring all the orens you need.

Loot everything you can, especially when doing side quests. It's not necessarily worthwhile to do every side quest on Dark mode, since many side quests just don't offer enough payoff to be worth the aggravation involved in beating them. Recommended side quests are listed here, based on how much cash they award you or how well they synergize with the needs of crafting your current set.

Relevant Quests

- **Malena**
- **The Nekker Contract**
- **The Endrega Contract**
- **Fight Club**
- **Bring It On**

Blasphemer's Set Details

Chapter 1: The Blasphemer's Set

Piece	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Diagram Cost	Craft Cost	Weight	Value	Effect 1	Effect 2
Ultimatum	12x Iron Ore	2x Hardened Leather	2x Timber	1x Diamond Dust	5x Nekker Teeth	501	125	5	37	Damage: 22-28	Rune Slots: 1
Anathema	4x Iron Ore	12x Silver Ore	3x Timber	2x Yellow Meteorite Ore	4x Nekker Teeth	501	135	6	29	Damage: 20-25	Rune Slots: 0
Trousers	4x Hardened Leather	4x Studded Leather	6x Robust Cloth	4x Endrega Hide		164	40	5	21	Armor: +2	Vitality +5
Gauntlets	6x Hardened Leather	2x Robust Cloth	4x Twine	2x Endrega Venom		201	40	1	59	Armor: +2	Maximum Load +15
Boots	4x Hardened Leather	2x Studded Leather	6x Robust Cloth	1x Endrega Hide	4x Hardened Leather	126	25	2	6	Armor: +1	Reduction of damage from magic +5%
Armor	14x Studded Leather	8x Nekker Claws	4x Amethyst Dust	4x Diamond Dust	6x Robust Cloth	1001	150	22	143	Armor: +15	Vitality +40
Merchant: Berthold Candeleria											

Component	Total Cost
All Blasphemer's Set Diagrams	2494
All Crafting Costs	515
Robust Cloth (20)	640
Studded Leather (20)	780
Hardened Leather (16)	416
Twine (4)	56
Amethyst Dust (4)	88
Diamond Dust (5)	145
Endrega Hide (5)	*
Endrega Venom (2)	*
Iron Ore (16)	256
Silver Ore (12)	540
Timber (5)	35
Nekker Teeth (9)	*
Nekker Claws (8)	*
Yellow Meteorite Ore (2)	**
Grand Total	5965
* Item cannot be purchased, it can only be obtained by killing the relevant species of monster.	
** Item cannot be purchased, it must be crafted,or found as random loot.	

Crafting Notes

- Twine, amethyst dust, diamond dust, iron ore, and timber occur commonly as random loot drops.
- Robust cloth, studded leather, hardened leather, silver ore, and yellow meteorite ore occur rarely as random loot drops.
- Endrega hide and endrega venom can only be obtained by slaying endregas.
- Nekker teeth and nekker claws can only be obtained by slaying nekkers.
- Amethyst dust, robust cloth, studded leather, and hardened leather can be crafted using easily obtained materials.

If you get unlucky with random loot and have to craft yellow meteorite ore, it can raise the cost of obtaining the silver sword Anathema substantially. The diagram for yellow meteorite ore is relatively costly and also requires costly materials, like a sun rune and moon rune, that cannot be easily crafted at this point in the game. Note that you probably can't get the cost reduction effect of Haggling while you prepare the Blasphemer's set. Ideally you should have this set assembled before you battle the kayran, but Haggling isn't unlocked until after you collect your reward from the merchants.

Chapter 2: The Oathbreaker's Set

Total Passive Bonuses When Wearing Complete Set

Armor	+38
Vitality	+75
Geralt's Maximum Load	+70
Resistance to Bleeding	+60%
Resistance to Poison	+65%
Resistance to Incineration	+50%
Magic Damage Reduction	+43%
Bonus Sign Damage	+8

Grinding for Orens

If you chose to side with Roche, making money in and around the Kaedweni Camp is fairly easy. If you continue with the arm-wrestling quests, the final contender, Adam Pangratt, can be a great way to make money. It may be slightly boring and tedious, but you can win 200 orens per win while arm-wrestling him. That said, be wary of that campfire he always sits around. On Dark mode, its tendency to set you on fire during dialogue sequences can be deadly.

In Vergen, you can't grind orens through arm-wrestling, but you can find lots of valuable loot stuffed into the city's nooks and crannies. You can net 260 orens at a time by entering the fistfighting circuit over and over again. While this can be tedious, it's one of the safest ways to make money in this particular chapter.

A somewhat more entertaining way to earn money on either route is to kill large numbers of harpies. On Roche's route, you can take advantage of the harpy spawn next to the Visionary's house. Once you kill them, enter the circle of candles outside the Visionary's house. Wait for a moment and then move back out of the circle. The harpies should respawn immediately. Harpy feathers sell for an awesome 9 orens apiece, and every other harpy piece sells for 4 orens. They also drop lots of other things, including mutagens, so it is very worthwhile.

On Iorveth's route, you can use a similar technique to farm harpies. Head out to the Old Quarry, before you've completed **The Harpy Contract**. As you follow the winding path down to the bottom of the quarry, you encounter a large number of harpies. Once you reach the bottom, find a safe place (by the entrance to the harpy lair is a good spot) and meditate for 12 hours. The harpies should have respawned by then, so you can fight them all the way back up the path again. Simply repeat until you have all of the orens you need.

Relevant Quests

- **Bring It On: Kaedweni Camp**
- **One on One: Vergen**
- **The Path to Vision** (Roche)
- **The Harpy Contract** (Iorveth)
- **The Queen Harpy Contract** (Iorveth)

Oathbreaker's Set Details

Chapter 2: The Oathbreaker's Set

Piece	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Diagram Cost	Craft Cost	Weight	Value	Effect 1	Effect 2
Black Unicorn	14x Iron Ore	2x Hardened Leather	3x Timber	2x Blue Meteorite Ore	5x Amethyst Dust	789	175	5	41	Damage: 32-45	Bleeding +20%
Virgin	2x Iron Ore	14x Silver Ore	2x Timber	2x fDiamond Dust	2x Essence of Death	939	200	6	51	Damage: 35-45	Poison +20%
Trousers	6x Hardened Leather	6x Harpy Feathers	4x Robust Cloth	4x Twine		689	135	5	46	Armor: +3	Vitality +15
Gauntlets	6x Hardened Leather	2x Robust Cloth	4x Twine	2x Amethyst Dust		251	60	1	78	Armor: +3	Resistance to Poisoning +15%
Boots	2x Studded Leather	4x Hardened Leather	2x Robust Cloth	2x Essence of Death		251	70	2	12	Armor: +2	Reduction of damage from magic +10%
Armor	18x Studded Leather	1x Draugir Armor Fragment	2x Twine	1x Diamond Dust	12x Robust Cloth	1876	550	22	315	Armor: +30	Reduction of damage from magic +33%
Merchant: Lasota (Roche)											
Merchant: Mael (Iorveth)											

Component	Total Cost
All Oathbreaker's Set Diagrams	4795
All Crafting Costs	1190
Robust Cloth (20)	640
Studded Leather (20)	780
Hardened Leather (18	468
Twine (10)	140
Amethyst Dust (11)	242
Diamond Dust (4)	116
Draugir Armor Fragment (1)	*
Essence of Death (4)	756
Iron Ore (16)	256
Silver Ore (14)	630
Timber (5)	35
Harpy Feather (6)	*
Blue Meteorite Ore (2)	52
Grand Total	10048
* Item cannot be purchased, it can only be obtained by killing the relevant species of monster.	

Crafting Notes

- Twine, amethyst dust, diamond dust, iron ore, and timber occur commonly as random loot drops.
- Robust cloth, studded leather, hardened leather, silver ore, and blue meteorite ore occur rarely as random loot drops.
- A draugir armor fragment can only be obtained by slaying a draugir or the unusual bullvore.
- Harpy feathers can only be obtained by slaying harpies.
- Amethyst dust, robust cloth, studded leather, and hardened leather can be crafted using easily obtained materials.

The big crafting material challenge in Chapter 2 is obtaining a draugir armor fragment. On Iorveth's route, you can only obtain them during the quests **Where Is Triss Merigold?** and **Prelude to War: Aedirn**. On Roche's route, you can only obtain them during **Prelude to War: Kaedwen** and during a curious sequence in **Hatred Symbolized** where, in the Tunnel of the Founders beneath Vergen, you can kill an unusual bullvore that yields draugir drops (and a bullvore brain) upon death. Try to pick up an armor fragment during one of the Prologue quests if you can, since that means you can create the set much earlier in the chapter. After you've defeated one of the draugirs, let the NPCs distract the other while you pick up the first draugir's drops. You may need to sheathe your sword to get the prompt to pick up the draugir's loot to appear.

While you can purchase essences of death in this chapter (from Felicia Cori on Iorveth's route or Myron on Roche's route), it is much cheaper to slay a handful of wraiths and get them instead. You have ample opportunities to slay wraiths during the quest **Death Symbolized** on both routes. On Roche's route you can get infinite wraiths to spawn in the hidden basement of Malget's house by lighting the candles in the incorrect order. On Iorveth's route, you can just go into the burned village at night and wait for wraiths to spawn, or go fight knight wraiths with the Scoia'tael unit that camps out at the edge of the cursed battlefield.

Blue meteorite ore can also be a problem material for crafting both the Oathbreaker's set in this chapter and the Kinslayer's set in the next chapter. You can purchase blue meteorite ore on Roche's route from Lasota. On Iorveth's route you can purchase it from Thorak (while he's alive) or Haggard. You also have the option of picking up the diagram for blue meteorite ore on that route from Earso. That said, crafting blue meteorite ore can actually be much more expensive than just buying it, as the recipe requires an earth rune and a moon rune. This is a material that you definitely want to send into storage for future use whenever you obtain it.

Chapter 3: The Kinslayer's Set

Total Passive Bonuses When Wearing Complete Set

Armor	+51
Vitality	+125
Geralt's Maximum Load	+25
Resistance to Bleeding	+85%
Resistance to Poison	+90%
Resistance to Incineration	+70%
Magic Damage Reduction	+55%
Bonus Sign Damage	+10
Vitality Regeneration	+2

Grinding for Orens

Making the Kinslayer's set in Chapter 3 is extremely challenging, since it's very difficult to amass money in this chapter. There aren't any especially lucrative mini-games to play. You need to either enter Chapter 3 with all the money you need farmed earlier in Chapter 2, or you have to use the harpy spawn near the dice players' building. This harpy spawn is a pale shadow of how lucrative the spawns in Chapter 2 are. You can try farming the gargoyle spawns in Loc Muinne instead of the harpies, but the gargoyles are more dangerous and tend to drop fewer items upon death.

Gargoyle drops are more valuable than harpy drops, though, and you need some gargoyle drops to make the Kinslayer's set anyway. It all really comes down to how easy it is for your build to kill gargoyles repeatedly. If you do decide to farm gargoyles, then the best place to repeatedly kill them is near the amphitheater. This space is open with lots of room to maneuver, at least compared to the other two gargoyle courtyards. You usually encounter three to five gargoyles here. Be careful not to finish **The Gargoyle Contract** or solve the rune puzzle beneath a courtyard you wish to farm, as this removes the gargoyles.

Both of these techniques require you to meditate for 12 hours to trigger the respawn, though the harpies can sometimes be reset with only six hours of meditation. Kill a group, wait in a safe place for 12 hours, and then they should come back.

Relevant Quests

- **The Gargoyle Contract**

Kinslayer's Set Details

Chapter 3: The Kinslayer's Set

Piece	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4	Component 5	Diagram Cost	Craft Cost	Weight	Value	Effect 1	Effect 2
Mourner	16x Iron Ore	4x Leather	2x Timber	3x Gargoyle Dust	2x Essence of Death	789	175	5	41	Damage: 52-60	Bleeding +40%
Weeper	2x Iron Ore	14x Silver Ore	2x Timber	2x Blue Meteorite Ore	4x Elemental Stone	939	200	6	51	Damage: 50-55	Poison +30%
Trousers	4x Twine	4x Studded Leather	2x Robust Cloth	1x Dragon Scales	1x Troll Tongue	689	135	5	46	Armor: +4	Vitality +40
Gauntlets	6x Hardened Leather	4x Robust Cloth	2x Twine	2x Gargoyle Dust	2x Harpy Feathers	251	60	1	78	Armor: +4	Resistance to Poisoning +20%
Boots	6x Hardened Leather	4x Studded Leather	4x Gargoyle Dust	2x Robust Cloth		251	70	2	12	Armor: +3	Reduction of damage from magic +15%
Armor	16x Hardened Leather	18x Robust Cloth	6x Twine	2x Harpy Saliva	6x Harpy Feathers	1876	550	22	315	Armor: +40	Reduction of damage from magic +40%
Merchant: Bras of Ban Ard											

Component	Total Cost
All Kinslayer's Set Diagrams	7882
All Crafting Costs	1625
Robust Cloth (26)	832
Leather (4)	80
Studded Leather (8)	312
Hardened Leather (28)	728
Twine (12)	168
Gargoyle Dust (9)	*
Troll Tongue (1)	439
Dragon Scales (1)	**
Essence of Death (2)	298
Iron Ore (18)	288
Silver Ore (14)	630
Timber (4)	28
Harpy Feather (8)	*
Blue Meteorite Ore (2)	52
Elemental Stone (4)	*
Harpy Saliva (2)	*
Grand Total	13310
* Item cannot be purchased, it can only be obtained by killing the relevant species of monster.	
** Item must be looted from either the Temerian camp (Roche's route) or Philippa Eilhart's house (Iorveth's route).	

Crafting Notes

- Twine, iron ore, leather, and timber occur commonly as random loot drops.
- Robust cloth, studded leather, hardened leather, silver ore, and blue meteorite ore occur rarely as random loot drops.
- Essences of death can only be purchased in this chapter. In previous chapters, they could be obtained by slaying wraiths, bruxae, or knight wraiths.
- A troll tongue can only be purchased in this chapter. In previous chapters, one could be obtained by slaying a troll or allying with the troll in the Chapter 1 quest **Troll Trouble**.
- Harpy feathers and harpy saliva can only be obtained by slaying harpies.
- Gargoyle dust and elemental stones can only be obtained by slaying gargoyles.
- Dragon scales can only be looted from specific locations. On Roche's route, you can get them from the Temerian camp. On Iorveth's route, you can get them from Philippa Eilhart's house.
- Robust cloth, studded leather, leather, elemental stones, and hardened leather can be crafted using easily obtained materials.

There are two main challenges to overcome when crafting the Kinslayer's set. One of the most significant is the need to carry certain crafting materials forward from prior chapters in order to save orens. It is easy to obtain the troll tongue and essence of death required in earlier chapters, but in this chapter they can only be purchased.

The other main challenge is obtaining the dragon scales. On Roche's route, you simply need to remember to visit the Temerian camp. On Iorveth's route, you must choose to pursue the main quest **The Spellbreaker** instead of **Where Is Triss Merigold?** at the beginning of the chapter. If you do not pursue **The Spellbreaker**, then you can never enter Philippa Eilhart's house and never obtain the dragon scales. It's worth noting that you can also get dragon scales by defeating the Operator, but it's very unlikely you'll pull this off in Dark mode without a complete Kinslayer's set.

ENTER THE DRAGON
Defeat the dragon.

Advanced

Arena Mode

Arena mode is a special bonus gameplay mode of *The Witcher 2* that is for players who really, really like combat. In Arena mode, you are tasked with surviving 30 rounds of battles against preset groups of opponents. You are rewarded with gear at the end of each round. Between rounds, you can hire companions and purchase oils, potions, traps, bombs, daggers, enhancements, and books from Dragan to prepare you for the next challenge. The selection of equipment rewards you can choose from after each round is randomized. Your companions can be killed and may leave if you begin losing. If by some miracle you survive more than 30 rounds in Arena mode the battles begin repeating. You can safely consider the mode beaten once you've cleared 30 rounds and/or have obtained the Operator's staff. You can also consider the mode beaten if you hit level 35.

Arena mode is a lot of fun to tackle after you've beaten the game once, since it lets you battle enemies that you would never encounter together in the wild. Figuring out how to deal with these mixed encounters while using your favorite skills and tricks is much of the challenge of Arena mode. As mentioned, this mode is generally meant for players who really enjoy combat in *The Witcher 2*. If you're mostly into story, you won't find much of that here (though there are some new NPCs you can meet). For the most part, Arena mode lets you boot up the game and quickly get into some action, or lets you find more fights to enjoy after beating all of the major battles offered by the main game.

There are many ways to beat Arena mode on many different difficulties, so this guide is simply going to outline which enemies you must deal with in each round and offer some general tips.

General Facts

After each round, you can select one piece of equipment to take from a list of three randomly-selected potential rewards. Due to the randomness, you may find yourself improvising around an unusual selection of gear. Generally the most important pieces of gear to upgrade regularly are your swords. If you can't get or don't need a sword upgrade, you should select a piece of armor, or try to upgrade what's in one of your less-important slots (boots, trousers, gauntlets, and trophy). Between rounds, you can check with the vendor to purchase potions, oils, and other enhancements for use in the next round. It's a good idea to keep armor fully-slotted with cheap enhancements, though slotting your swords with runes is going to be prohibitively expensive early on.Potions and oils in Arena mode work the same way they do in the main game. They last until the real-time timers for them run out. Skills that affect potion and oil duration work the same way in this mode that they do in the main game, too.

Experience does not work the same way in Arena mode. In Arena mode, Geralt gains one character level at the end of each round. If you want, think of each round of combat you clear as being worth 1,000 XP.

The arena holds some circles that you can take advantage of if you like. Downstairs, you can find a circle of power. Near the boxes you use to arm-wrestle, in a corner next to a rack of barrels, is a circle of strength. The circles do not reset until you've survived round 30 of combat and the waves begin to repeat, so think carefully about when you want to use them.

There is no increase in difficulty when the fights begin repeating after level 30. You receive the exact same oren rewards, although your item rewards will naturally vary. Your rewards at this point are primarily enhancements and mutagens, and occasionally armor. Weapon rewards are relatively rare.

Just as in the main game, level 35 is the game's level cap. Geralt cannot level up any farther. Once you've gotten a Geralt to level 35 in Arena mode, you've effectively beaten it. You can have fun starting over from the beginning and trying to level Geralt up differently, though.

Sometime near round 30, you might have the opportunity to take the Operator's staff. This weapon's high freezing and incineration values make fighting human opponents completely hilarious. Seriously, it's loads of fun and we highly recommend trying it out.

Fights and Rewards

FIGHT	MOBS	REWARD (ORENS)	TIME (SECONDS)	SCORE (MAX BONUS) EASY	NORMAL	HARD	DARK
1	3 La Valette Swordsmen, 1 La Valette Armored Footman, 1 La Valette Arbalist	100	90	25 (100)	50 (200)	100 (400)	150 (600)
2	2 Bandit Halberdiers, 2 Bandit Shield Bearers, 1 Bandit Swordsman	125	90	50 (200)	100 (400)	200 (800)	300 (1,200)
3	5 Nekkers, 2 Nekker Warriors	150	90	75 (300)	150 (600)	300 (1,200)	450 (1,800)
4	2 Scoia' tael Swordmasters, 2 Scoia'tael Archers	150	90	100 (400)	200 (800)	400 (1,600)	600 (2,400)
5	2 Endrega Warriors, 3 Endregas	175	90	125 (500)	250 (1,000)	500 (2,000)	750 (3,000)
6	1 Sorcerer, 2 Kingslayers	175	90	150 (600)	300 (1,200)	600 (2,400)	900 (3,600)
7	1 Werewolf	175	90	175 (700)	350 (1,400)	700 (2,800)	1,050 (4,200)
8	2 Guardsman Halberdiers, 2 Armored Guardsmen, 2 Guardsman Arbalists	200	90	200 (800)	400 (1,600)	800 (3,200)	1,200 (4,800)
9	1 Bruxa, 2 Wraiths, 2 Zombie Swordsmen	225	90	225 (900)	450 (1,800)	900 (3,600)	1,350 (5,400)
10	1 Elite Kingslayer, 1 Kingslayer	225	90	250 (1,000)	500 (2,000)	1,000 (4,000)	1,500 (6,000)
11	14 Nekkers, 5 Nekker Warriors	250	90	275 (1,100)	550 (2,200)	1,100 (4,400)	1,650 (6,600)
12	5 Drowners, 2 Drowned Dead	250	90	300 (1,200)	600 (2,400)	1,200 (4,800)	1,800 (7,200)
13	1 Sorcerer, 2 Kaedweni Armored Footmen, 1 Kaedweni Arbalist	275	90	325 (1,300)	650 (2,600)	1,300 (5,200)	1,950 (7,800)
14	6 Harpies, 4 Erynias	275	90	350 (1,400)	700 (2,800)	1,400 (5,600)	2,100 (8,400)
15	3 Armored Dwarf, 2 Dwarf Arbalists	300	90	375 (1,500)	750 (3,000)	1,500 (6,000)	2,250 (9,000)
16	5 Rotfiends, 2 Greater Rotfiends	300	90	400 (1,600)	800 (3,200)	1,600 (6,400)	2,400 (9,600)
17	2 Sorcerers, 4 Kaedweni Swordsmen, 1 Kaedweni Shield Bearer	325	90	425 (1,700)	850 (3,400)	1,700 (6,800)	2,550 (10,200)
18	12 Nekkers, 2 Trolls, 4 Nekker Warriors	325	90	450 (1,800)	900 (3,600)	1,800 (7,200)	2,700 (10,800)
19	3 Kingslayers, 2 Sorcerers	350	90	475 (1,900)	950 (3,800)	1,900 (7,600)	2,850 (11,400)
20	4 Werewolves	350	120	500 (2,000)	1,000 (4,000)	2,000 (8,000)	3,000 (12,000)
21	2 Elite Kingslayers	375	90	525 (2,100)	1050 (4,200)	2,100 (8,400)	3,150 (12,600)
22	2 Arachasae, 5 Endrega Warriors, 2 Queen Endregas	375	90	550 (2,200)	1100 (4,400)	2,200 (8,800)	3,300 (13,200)
23	3 Bullvores, 4 Rotfiends, 2 Greater Rotfiends*	400	90	575 (2,300)	1150 (4,600)	2,300 (9,200)	3,450 (13,800)
24	5 Golems (Earth Elementals)*	400	90	600 (2,400)	1,200 (4,800)	2,400 (9,600)	3,600 (14,400)
25	8 Wraiths, 2 Zombie Arbalists, 3 Zombie Swordsmen	425	90	625 (2,500)	1250 (5,000)	2,500 (10,000)	3,750 (15,000)
26	7 Gargoyles	425	120	650 (2,600)	1,300 (5,200)	2,600 (10,400)	3,900 (15,600)
27	4 Werewolves, 8 Nekker Warriors	450	120	675 (2,700)	1350 (5,400)	2,700 (10,800)	4,050 (16,200)
28	6 Draugir	450	120	700 (2,800)	1,400 (5,600)	2,800 (11,200)	4,200 (16,800)
29	3 Golems (Fire Elementals), 7 Gargoyles*	500	120	725 (2,900)	1450 (5,800)	2,900 (11,600)	4,350 (17,400)
30	1 Draug, 6 Draugir	500	120	750 (3,000)	1,500 (6,000)	3,000 (12,000)	4,500 (18,000)

* In these battles, the movements of the large enemies you battle cause the camera to shake. This significantly increases the difficulty of the fight. In rounds 23 and 29, focus on eliminating the large enemies first to end the camera-shaking effect.

Points are awarded in Arena mode based on two criteria. First, you get points simply for completing each round. How many points you get depends on the difficulty setting you played on. You can play Arena mode on Easy, Normal, Hard, or Dark difficulty. Naturally, the higher the difficulty, the more default points per round you get for clearing the battle.

On top of your default points score, you are awarded bonus points based on how many cool stunts you pulled off during the fight and how quickly you finished. How many points you get as a bonus depends on a variety of factors, including the difficulty level you're playing on and how far into the battle circuit you are. There is a hard cap on how many bonus points you can earn per round, which increases as you play on higher difficulties. Since the values of bonus point stunts change according to difficulty, the specific value of a given stunt will be unique to your game and where you are in it.

We can confirm that bonus points are awarded primarily for pulling off these feats in combat, though:

- Knocking an enemy off the edge of the arena with Aard.
- Performing a finishing move on a stunned opponent.
- Performing an instant kill.
- Successfully using Riposte to counter an enemy's attack.
- Finishing before the time limit runs out. The quicker you finish, the higher the bonus.

Companions

COMPANION	ROLE	PRICE	NOTES
Harald Gord	Archer	250	After hiring him, you can speak to him again to play dice.
Vincent Molnar	Melee Fighter	500	After hiring him, you can speak to him again to arm-wrestle.
Lady Adrianna	Sorceress	1000	After hiring her, you can speak to her again to reset your skills.

If you have orens burning a hole in your pocket and the vendor has no equipment you want to buy, consider hiring a companion. You can choose the dwarven mercenary Harald Gord, the human knight Vincent Molnar, or the sorceress Lady Adrianna. Generally, the more powerful a companion is, the more effective he or she is in combat.

Harald, for instance, is useful largely as a way to draw mobs away from you, while Lady Adrianna can take down enemies on her own. The main downside to hiring Lady Adrianna is that despite her expense, she has the lowest overall vitality of the three possible companions. You must take measures to keep mobs from swarming and overwhelming her, or you lose her quickly. Vincent is sort of a midpoint between the two extremes, able to dish out decent damage and stay alive a fairly long time.

Note that all of your companions can be overwhelmed and defeated in the arena, though, so don't necessarily count on a companion surviving dozens of rounds of combat with you. Generally, companions stay with you until they're overwhelmed by enemies, until you hire a new companion, or until you've lost too many rounds of combat. Sometimes if you lose and choose to keep going, your companion opts to stay with you.

Note that you get a bonus for hiring each companion at least once. After hiring Harald, you can speak with him again to play dice. After hiring Vincent, you can speak with him again to arm-wrestle. After hiring Lady Adrianna once, you can speak to her in order to reset your skills. This works the way it does when you speak to the Operator in the main game, and she will only let you do it once.

Build Advice

There are a lot of ways to build Geralt to get through Arena mode on the difficulty setting of your choice, but a strong build is going to follow certain basic rules of thumb.

Generally, the best Dark mode builds are going to be well-rounded builds. You can't afford to specialize purely in any one skill tree, because of the way battles mix different types of enemies. You are likely to find yourself dealing with enemies that resist magic one minute, then enemies that are resistant to sword damage the next. If you want to make it to round 30, don't put all of your eggs in one basket.

Try to invest your talents in skills that are always going to be useful. Anything that increases vitality, reduces damage, boosts vigor, or accelerates vitality regeneration in combat is going to prove useful. Stay away from talents that give bonuses *out* of combat, since they're basically useless in this game mode. If you're not in combat, nothing is going to be threatening you.

Finally, be very conservative about investing in the alchemy tree. Getting to any of the useful skills involves spending talents on skills like Harvester that are basically useless in this mode. Impregnation is also not worthwhile in the arena, since rewards are not guaranteed. You don't know when you're going to get a worthwhile mutagen, so the points you invest in Impregnation may never be put to good use. Take more immediately useful talents from the mage and swordsmanship trees instead.

Once you unlock your adrenaline abilities, you may find you can save adrenaline between matches. Your adrenaline degrades over time as it does in a standard game, but not significantly. It's still possible to enter a tough battle with an almost-full adrenaline meter and take a large threat out of the fight very quickly.

If you want some more ideas for how to build Geralt for the arena, then check out the sample build included here. This is the "Prima build" used in the Prima offices to clear Arena mode. Other builds that can clear Arena mode are certainly possible, and you can probably think of ways to improve this build as you play with Arena mode yourself. What you should pay attention to here is how this build fits the rules of thumb we've outlined.

LEVEL	TALENT	LEVEL	TALENT
1	—	19	Invincible
2	Hardiness	20	Combat Acumen
3	Parrying	21	Whirlwind
4	Fortitude	22	Invincible
5	Hardiness	23	Combat Acumen
6	Fortitude	24	Tough Guy
7	Parrying	25	Feet Work
8	Feet Work	26	Magical Vigor
9	Schemer	27	Whirlwind
10	Tough Guy	28	Hardy
11	Hardy	29	Whirl
12	Whirl	30	Finesse
13	Schemer	31	Magical Vigor
14	Enhanced Axii Sign	32	Fatal Attraction
15	Enhanced Quen Sign	33	Fatal Attraction
16	Enhanced Quen Sign	34	Synthesis
17	Venting	35	Synthesis
18	Finesse		

This build takes the steps necessary to keep Geralt alive and mobile. This build invests heavily in skills to increase vitality and resistances while reducing the damage Geralt takes. Feet Work is essential in the arena to improve Geralt's mobility and dodging ability, while Quen III and both levels of Venting act both as a strong defense and a passive offense. Axii III and both levels of Fatal Attraction help you turn foes into pawns that distract other enemies.

Finally, this build invests talents in causing critical effects. Being able to freeze, stun, and instantly kill opponents gives you a huge advantage, especially when you're into the final rounds. Note that none of these talents boost effectiveness of specific critical effects. Since your weapons change frequently and are chosen from basically random selections, you need to be ready to take advantage of the strengths of any weapon you lay hands on.

Final Tips

If you have a strong build and get good equipment, you should have no trouble handling Arena mode on the difficulty of your choice. The only way you can really fail is if you employ bad tactics or let the enemies overwhelm you. The final bits of advice we can offer you for getting through Arena mode are these tips. If you start struggling in Arena mode and you can't figure out why you're losing, read these and see if they help you figure out what you should be doing differently.

Combat Tips

When battling monsters like werewolves or trolls, use tactics that fit how many enemies are on the field. If there's only one enemy left on the field or if you're trying to put a single big monster down quickly, focus on staying on top of it. Keep bashing away at it with your sword. These enemies suffer a certain amount of hit-stun after they've taken a blow, so you can use repeated quick blows to keep them locked up in staggering animations. This lets you finish off a potentially deadly opponent with relative ease.

Although this isn't included in the Prima sample build, it can be extremely worthwhile to invest in Aard while in the arena. You can use Aard to blow enemies off the edge of the arena, which lets you get a point bonus and eliminate an enemy very quickly. If you find this approach suits you, invest in Aard instead of the Axii-related abilities.

Using Axii to dominate an enemy removes it as a threat for a short time, while also giving you another ally. This is not a good tactic if you want to get a lot of time-based bonuses, but if you're just trying to survive it works wonderfully.

Before each fight, you can check to see what you're fighting in the next round and, more importantly, what your specific rewards will be. Simply click on the arena door, see what you will be facing and the possible rewards, and then back out. This way you can better plan which reward to take when you succeed.

The potions you use early on in Arena mode aren't necessarily the ones you want for later battles. Some potions that are useless early on become extremely useful during later rounds, when you gain access to boosted stats and strong gear. A good potion combination to use early on is Rook, Swallow, and Golden Oriole. Good potion combinations later on will include stronger brews like Virga, Thunderbolt, or White Raffard's Decoction.

The arena merchant doesn't work quite like the merchants in the main game. He never restocks if you, say, meditate to pass the time. The stock of items he has after you finish one round is all you can attempt to take into the next round. The store does not restock until you complete another round, whether you win or lose it. The arena merchant slowly restocks over time. For some items, the available quantity only increases by one after each fight.

Dodge, dodge, dodge. You still take damage when blocking, so keep moving! Keep rolling until the opportunity to strike presents itself.

If you must block, then invest in Riposte. Not only is using Riposte successfully worth bonus points, but it prevents you from taking damage and deals heavy damage to the enemy who has to soak up your counterattack.

Gear Tips

Know your equipment. Make sure you upgrade important equipment like armor and swords regularly. It's hard to plan an upgrade path for your gear since the selection is random, so focus instead on just not falling behind the game's power curve. If you haven't upgraded your steel sword for a while, then focus on finding a replacement for it.

Make sure to check the stats of a new piece of gear you're interested in against what you're using already. ou need to make gear choices that have the greatest overall impact on your stats. Choices that give only incremental upgrades like a few more points of damage or a mere +1 to armor are less valuable than choices that might, say, use your trophy slot to give you a much bigger boost.

When it comes to selecting armor, focus on high armor value, vitality and vigor bonuses, and higher critical effects resistances. Resistances to incineration, poison, and bleeding are most useful since these are the effects enemies are most likely to try to inflict on you.

While you should try to slot out equipment if you can, how many rune slots a blade has is far less important in the first 30 waves of Arena mode than it is in the main game. Runes are too expensive to buy a full set for each sword you use, and you don't get a lot of runes as loot until you're into the second 30 waves. Judge swords by their base stats only. If a new sword has better stats than your current sword, but fewer slots, it's still an upgrade.

Be sure to read the entire stat block of a piece of equipment before making a choice. You may see that a piece of equipment is "epic" or has a high resell value and assume it's really powerful, only to find out that it boosts something like maximum load that's useless in Arena mode.

Dragan

Default Items	Prices	Default Items	Prices
Necrophage Oil	126	Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	51
Hanged Man's Venom	126	Robust Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	76
Insectoid Oil	126	Superb Well-Balanced Silver Dagger	101
Specter Oil	126	Sting	126
Brown Oil	126	Poisoned Harpy Claw	126
Falka's Blood	126	Sun Rune	376
Whirl	126	Ysgith Rune	501
Arachnid Oil	126	Earth Rune	251
Grapeshot	101	Moon Rune	376
Devil's Puffball	126	Fire Rune	501
Samum	101	Fibre Enhancer	33
Dancing Star	126	Mail Enhancement	158
Dragon's Dream	101	Runic Armor Enhancement	104
Zerrikanian Sun	101	Armor Enhancement	32
Conflagration	76	Leather Enhancement	33
Clawer	51	Hardened Leather Reinforcement	33
Talgar Winter	76	Reinforced Leather Enhancement	34
Gadwall	26	Robust Leather Reinforcement	33
Tawny Owl	26	Studded Leather Reinforcement	64
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ENTER THE DRAGON
Defeat the dragon.

Advanced

Achievements

Some games offer achievements for doing bizarre, intricate things that must be explained in great detail. Fortunately, *The Witcher 2* isn't one of those games. It mainly awards achievements for things you'll end up doing anyway if you play the game long enough. Every achievement is explained in detail in some other part of the guide, simply in the course of explaining how the game works and what you can do. For this reason, the achievement list here is cross-referenced against the rest of the guide. If you want to know how to get the Backbone achievement, for instance, you can simply flip to the part of the walkthrough that discusses making the kayran carapace armor.

The achievements are identical across the PC and Xbox 360 versions of the game, with one exception. For Xbox 360 players, the Madman achievement is unlocked by beating the game in Dark mode. For PC players, Madman is unlocked by beating the game at Insane difficulty. Players of both versions should find the tips offered in the Dark difficulty guide useful for obtaining this achievement.

Achievement	Gamerscore	Conditions
Eagle Eye	10	Hit Count Etcheverry using the ballista.
To Aedirn!	5	Complete Chapter 1.
Alea Iacta Est	10	Complete Chapter 2.
Once Ain't Enough	15	Complete Chapter 3.
Apprentice	10	Use alchemy to brew five potions.
Master Alchemist	10	Acquire the Mutant ability.
Avenger	30	Finish the game by killing Letho.
The Butcher of Blaviken	30	Kill 500 foes.
Miser	10	Have over 10,000 orens on hand.
Focus	30	Perform three successful ripostes in a row.
Craftsman	10	Hire a craftsman to create an item.
Pest Control	20	Finish all quests involving the destruction of monster nests.
Backbone	20	Craft a suit of armor from elements of the kayran's carapace.
Being Witcher George	20	Kill the dragon.
Fat Man	15	Kill the draug.
Torn Asunder!	15	Kill more than one opponent using a single exploding bomb.
Gambler	15	Win an arm-wrestling match, a dice poker game, and a fistfight.
Gladiator	15	Defeat all opponents in the Kaedweni arena.
Heartbreaker	10	Seduce Ves.
Madman	100	Finish the game while playing in Dark mode (Xbox 360) or at the Insane difficulty level (PC).
Kingmaker	15	Help Roche rescue Anais from the Kaedweni Camp.
Dragonheart	20	Spare or save Saskia.
Journeyman	10	Achieve character level 10.
Guru	50	Achieve character level 35.
Librarian	30	Find all additional information about the insane asylum's history.
Master of Magic	10	Acquire the Sense of Magic ability.
Mutant!	30	Enhance abilities using mutagens at least five times.
Necromancer	50	Relive all of Auckes's memories in Dethmold's vision.
Old Friends	30	Finish the game by sparing Letho.
Last Man Standing	15	Win 30 fights in the arena.
Perfectionist	15	Kill 10 foes in a row without losing any vitality.
Poker!	30	Roll five of a kind at dice poker.
Tried and True	10	Win five matches in the arena.
The Fugitive	5	Complete the Prologue.
Ricochet	10	Kill a foe by deflecting his own arrow at him.
Sensitive Guy	10	Save Sile from dying in the unstable portal.
Intimidator	15	Intimidate someone.
Man of the Shadows	15	Successfully sneak through Loredo's garden and find the component of the kayran trap.
Black Ops	20	Sneak through the lower camp without raising the alarm.
Spellbreaker	15	Help Iorveth find the dagger needed to free Saskia from the spell that holds her.
Reasons of State	15	Stop Roche from killing Henselt.
Swordmaster	10	Acquire the Combat Acumen ability.
Oh My God! You Killed the Kayran! You Bastards!	10	Kill the kayran.
Artful Dodger	30	Cut off a tentacle using the kayran trap.
To Be Continued...	50	Finish the game at any difficulty level.
Tourist	10	Tour the camp with Zyvik.
Threesome	15	Kill three foes at once by performing a group finisher.
Friend of Trolls	15	Spare all trolls in the game.
Trollslayer	30	Kill all the trolls in the game.
Witchhunt	10	Leave Sile to die in the unstable portal.

ENTER THE DRAGON
Defeat the dragon.

Advanced

Geralts Lovers

The rest of the guide discusses the violence in this game in great detail. However, not all of Geralt's thoughts are geared toward violence. He is also a lover of women, potentially many women. Geralt can make love to a great many memorable virtual women in this game, provided you say and do the right things. A player who is a fighter doesn't need to consult this section, but if you want your version of Geralt to be a lover, read on.

A major note before you start reading: It is impossible to make love to every available woman in the game on a single playthrough. The problem is the route split at the end of Chapter 1. Siding with Iorveth or Roche gives you access to completely different women. If you're all about making Geralt the biggest stud possible, side with Iorveth at the end of Chapter 1. This gives Geralt access to Mottle, the Succubus, and Cynthia in addition to enough whores to cross a river on. If you side with Roche, you can only make time with Ves (and also a great many prostitutes).

There are also some major female characters that you simply cannot sleep with, though you might expect otherwise. These characters are detailed in "The Untouchables" section, so you know where not to waste your time.

Triss

It should be no surprise that Triss is available. It's a major plot point that she's become your lover. During the Prologue, if you pick "On the day of the attack," Geralt can wake up in bed next to an entirely naked Triss.

- Chapter 1
- Quest: The Rose of Remembrance

At the beginning of the quest, you must choose to take Triss along with you. When you reach the garden, there will be a fight with a group of thugs, and then a cutscene. When given the chance, say "You could use a bath" to Triss.

If you're worried that Geralt's promiscuity is a bit irresponsible, bear in mind that the mutations that turn a human child into a witcher render him completely sterile. Witchers are also immune to all diseases, which nullifies STDs as a concern.

Ves

- Chapter 2 (Roche)
- Quest: Ave Henselt!

After you defeat all the other challengers in the tournament, Ves challenges you. You must defeat her to unlock the option to sleep with her. After beating her in the tournament, you can find her outside Roche's tent. When given the chance, make these dialogue choices:

That was a great fight.

I also feel like using this opportunity.

She's both brave and beautiful.

I like that idea.

Mottle

- Chapters 1 & 2 (Iorveth)
- Quest: The Prison Barge

At the end of Chapter 1, you must choose to side with Iorveth by completing the quest **At a Crossroads: Scoia'tael**. When you get the chance, choose to save the girls from the burning tower instead of chasing down Loredo.

During Chapter 2, any time after you've completed **The War Council**, leave Vergen through the Mahakam Gate. Take a left when you see the cart with the red roof. Mottle, the blonde elf you saved, is waiting for you there. Speak to her. When given the chance, make these dialogue choices:

Tempt? All right.

Speak with her again after the sex scene to obtain the key to the Tunnel of the Founders, which opens up a very useful shortcut.

Note

If you are playing the Australian version of the game, the scene with Mottle is not available. You can initiate the sequence of events leading up to it, but Geralt only has the dialogue option for turning her down.

Succubus

- Chapter 2 (Iorveth)
- Quest: With Flickering Heart

This is a bit complicated. For your purposes here, you just want to make sure that you side with the Succubus and not against her. These instructions represent the most direct way to trigger the scene you want.

First, buy the surgical tools from Felicia Cori before you go to investigate the corpses in the Dwarven Catacombs. When you come to the fresh corpse, be sure to examine its arms to get the metal fragment and turn the body over to find Dandelion's poetry sketchbook. Talk to Dandelion back in Vergen and convince him to help you lure out the Succubus.

Meet Dandelion in the burned village at night. Have Dandelion recite poetry from his sketchbook. He must recite the poems correctly for the Succubus to appear. Have him use the following responses:

If our bodies…

My heart would inquire…

Or treat it as a morsel…

After the Succubus appears, you can send Dandelion in with her or have Dandelion go back and get Geralt. Sending Geralt in is a bit quicker, but you can still side with the Succubus if you send Dandelion in. If you send Dandelion in, you must say "Like the others?" to begin the dialogue. If you send Geralt in by himself, he skips this step and goes right to the dialogue choices listed. You must say the following things in this cutscene:

Who's the murderer?

What's his name?

I'll talk to Ele'yas.

When speaking to Ele'yas, say:

You lied to me.

I don't believe you.

Next, go see Iorveth after the dialogue with Ele'yas ends. Note that one of the conversation options you absolutely must say will not appear unless you extracted the metal fragment from the fresh corpse earlier using the surgical tools. Say these lines:

Ele'yas is a murderer.

I have this blade.

This triggers a cutscene where Iorveth says that Ele'yas has fled town. Go to the burned village and Ele'yas attacks you. After you've defeated him, go see the Succubus again. Say "Sounds good to me" to initiate the sex scene.

Note

If you are playing the Australian version of the game, the scene with the Succubus is not available. You can successfully follow the steps for siding with her, but Geralt only has the dialogue option for turning her down.

Cynthia

- Chapter 3 (Iorveth)
- Quest: A Tome Truly Rare

Triggering the sex scene with Cynthia can be tricky. To get the scene, you must complete the side quest **The Secrets of Loc Muinne** and its subquest **Dearhenna's Journal** in specific ways, so that you trigger a specific version of the side quest **A Tome Truly Rare**. **The Secrets of Loc Muinne** has three possible outcomes, two of which leave Cynthia alive, but in only one of those is she still present in Loc Muinne. If Cynthia is still alive and in Loc Muinne at the end of **The Secrets of Loc Muinne**, you automatically trigger the correct versions of **Dearhenna's Journal** and **A Tome Truly Rare**.

Here's a condensed list of instructions:

During the dialogue at the beginning of **The Secrets of Loc Muinne**, agree to work with Cynthia by saying "Fine, I'll help you."

When you find the hidden artifact toward the end of the quest, say "I'd like to try the artifact."

After the ensuing battle with Adalbert, ask Cynthia "Will we meet again?"

Before you leave Dearhenna's secret lab, you must collect Dearhenna's notes I, II, III, IV, and V. All are located either in the lab or in the adjoining puzzle room. This completes the quest **Dearhenna's Journal**, which is a prerequisite for triggering **A Tome Truly Rare**.

If you've done everything correctly, then you can find Cynthia waiting for you at the Loc Muinne inn. Go there and speak with her. During the conversation, you must say the following things exactly. Anything else means you don't get the sex scene:

What did Dearhenna actually research?

I know about the book.

Every word you say is a lie…

I'm curious to know the real Cynthia.

[Embrace Cynthia.]

Brothel

- Chapter 1
- Quest: Anytime. Found in the basement of the inn.

All the women require a bribe of at least 100 orens. Paying them extra has no effect on the scenes you trigger with them. You might as well save your money and just pay the minimum.

Each woman has a unique introduction scene, but they all share the same sex scene choreography. So in a certain sense, if you've slept with one of them, you've literally slept with them all. Three women are available, but their names will be randomly generated. Just talk to the various women in the brothel to see which ones are doing business.

Camp Followers

- Chapter 2
- Quest: If you sided with Iorveth, you can only visit the camp followers during **Where Is Triss Merigold?**, when you cross the cursed battlefield to sneak into the Nilfgaardian camp. If you sided with Roche, you may visit anytime.

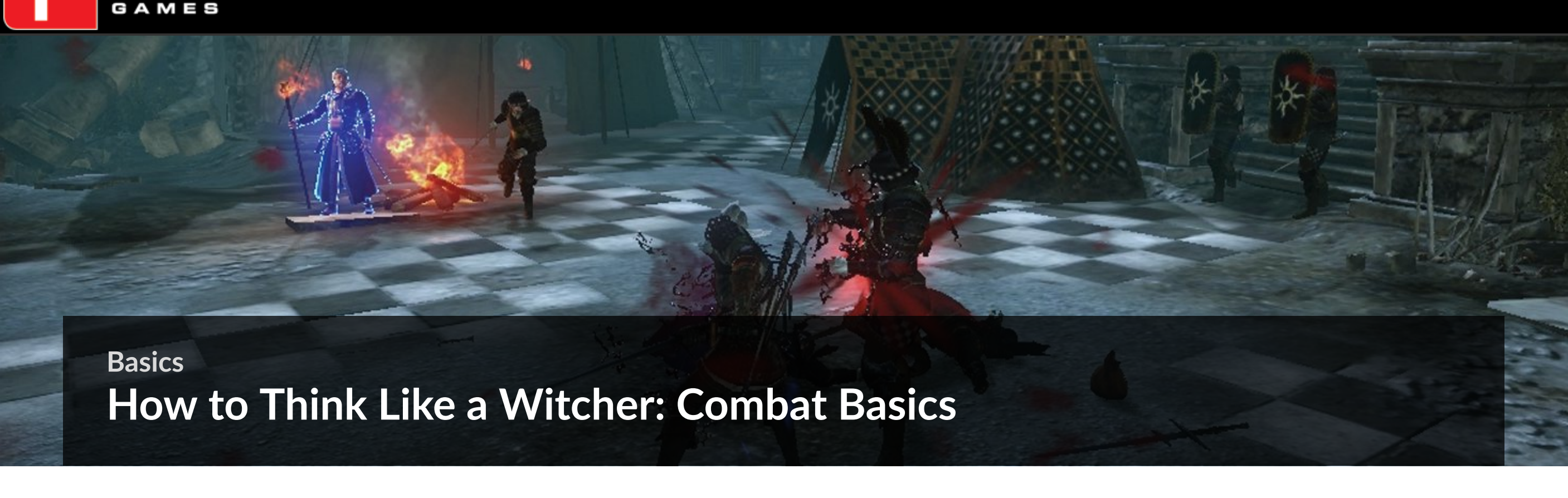
As at the Flotsam brothel, the women all require a minimum bribe of 100 orens in exchange for their services, and there's no point in paying them extra. Each of the women has a unique introduction scene. Three of them share a standard scene, while two of them feature unique scenes. So if you want to see all of the scenes, you should reserve 300 orens to buy the two unique whores and then one of the generic ones. Here's the list of available women:

- Birdie (standard)
- Big Bust Miriam (standard)
- Arseleta (standard)
- Licking Lucy (unique)
- Whistling Wendy (unique)

The Untouchables

These women are major figures in the game but are completely resistant to Geralt's charms. No matter what you do, you cannot trigger a sex scene with any of them.

- **Saskia of Vergen:** The closest you get here is an amusing peasant's sex fantasy about her. Pick up the green dream crystal and put it in the projector in the harpy lair while pursuing **The Queen Harpy Contract** in Iorveth's version of Chapter 2. If you save Saskia's life by completing the quest **The Spellbreaker** before defeating her dragon form in Chapter 3, you can find out why Saskia has no interest in Geralt (it's not the "virgin" stuff). Ask her about Iorveth and you find out that Saskia is primarily attracted to dwarves. Huh. Maybe if Geralt grew out a beard…
- **Philippa Eilhart:** You can see a racy scene of her and her assistant, the "leashed" sorceress Cynthia, during Iorveth's version of Chapter 2. You can get with Cynthia in Iorveth's version of Chapter 3, so what about Philippa? Well, aside from the fact that she spends most of Chapter 3 in a dungeon, asking around about her makes it clear that she's a lesbian. She sometimes sleeps with dudes as part of politics, but never for fun.
- **Síle de Tansarville:** There's no clear-cut reason why Síle has no interest in Geralt, but she definitely doesn't. If you speak with Zoltan about her during Vergen Besieged, he theorizes that Síle might be in a relationship with Philippa and share a similar preference for female lovers. This might be true—then again, Síle might just be too busy conspiring to control the kingdoms of the north to make time for Geralt.
- **Malena:** This cunning elf tricks Geralt into thinking she's interested in him if he chooses to cover up her role in helping the Scoia'tael kill off Flotsam's town guard. If you go meet her for what she implies will be a forest rendezvous, though, you end up with half a dozen Scoia'tael trying to kill you. Which is probably how she killed all those guards, come to think of it.



Basics

How to Think Like a Witcher: Combat Basics

The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings Enhanced Edition is a mature story-driven game that emphasizes action and character customization. Getting through battles demands sharp reflexes and the ability to quickly assess the dangers presented by a combat situation. That's not to say better armor and equipment won't help, but good stats won't save you from bad decisions. This section outlines how to make good decisions while in combat and to maximize Geralt's combat potential. At the very least, if something keeps killing you over and over again, reading this section should give you some ideas for how to better approach the battle.

Dodging

Some games are all about blocking attacks. This game is all about dodging. That's not to say blocking is totally ineffective, but even on lower difficulties powerful attacks still do a bit of damage to you. Blocking also consumes vigor, and if you block too often, you may simply lose your ability to block. It's best to start training yourself to dodge in dangerous situations. Once you're really good at this, you can use dodging both to get out of dangerous situations and to put yourself in the best position for an attack.

If playing with a controller, you dodge in *The Witcher 2* by moving the left stick in any direction while holding down the dodge button. If playing on a PC with mouse and keyboard controls, you can dodge forward by tapping the space bar and in any direction by tapping the appropriate movement key twice. You can't change directions once you begin dodging in a particular direction. Geralt's dodging animation is a compact roll that can get him far away from enemies in a very short time. Note that Geralt is not invincible while dodging, so if you dodge too late or roll by an attacking enemy, you can take damage. It is possible to use dodge rolls to interrupt attack animations, though. Once you've got some practice, you can roll in to hit an enemy, deal damage, then begin rolling back out before the animation has completed.

When dodging, you move exponentially faster than you do when walking or even when in an attacking animation. You can further improve Geralt's ability to dodge by investing talents in the Feet Work ability as you level up, and this is highly recommended. With levels of Feet Work, Geralt's dodge rolls move farther and he rolls faster. You move much faster than you do when running over a similar distance and can use constant dodge-rolling to rapidly cover ground while traveling. Once you've mastered the dodge roll, you can roll circles around groups of enemies while setting yourself up to attack from the best possible angle.

Sword Types

In most games, you equip a weapon and use it to kill things. It doesn't really matter what you equip, provided its numbers are big enough. *The Witcher 2* is not like most games in this regard. By default, Geralt should equip two different swords, each used in a different type of situation. Steel swords damage humans and humanoid races like elves and dwarves. Silver swords damage monsters and monster-like sentient races like trolls, dragons, and succubi.

Usually when you enter combat, Geralt draws the appropriate sword for a situation automatically from his back. Sometimes you fight a mix of humans and monsters, though. These situations get tricky. You must decide which type of enemy you want to go after first and be careful not to end up attacking, say, a monster with a steel sword. Your blows won't be wholly ineffective, but the damage you inflict is greatly reduced.

After you've played the game awhile, you should develop an instinctive feel for pulling out the right sword in the right situation. If you do need to switch swords during combat, make sure you don't accidentally sheathe your sword instead. When your sword is sheathed, you cannot dodge roll. Losing your ability to dodge while surrounded by enemies can be a death sentence.

So Why the Two Swords?

Something that can confuse first-time players of *The Witcher 2* is the unusual two-sword mechanic. It can seem like a strange and arbitrary thing if your expectations are more along the lines of a typical fantasy game. There's a good reason for it, though.

The Witcher games are based on the novels of Polish fantasy author Andrzej Sapkowski, who used his tales to examine folklore, mythology, and typical assumptions about fantastical creatures. In the world of *The Witcher*, monsters are explicitly beings from other universes who entered the world as part of a strange event called the Conjunction (which is detailed in an in-game book you can read, *The Conjunction of the Spheres*).

Since all monsters are native to worlds that aren't the default world of the main characters, they share a single weakness. Silver is effective against all monsters in *The Witcher* universe due to their extraplanar nature. Of course, silver is a soft metal and difficult to turn into a good sword without resorting to magic, so you shouldn't go around dulling the blade trying to stab humans with it. This is where the mundane steel swords come in.

Blocking and Countering

While it's best to get used to dodging instead of blocking, there's still a definite role in the game for blocking. Generally, the best time to block attacks and make use of mechanics that stem from blocking is when you're fighting human opponents. When a human opponent attacks one who is blocking, the attacker staggers from the force the block deflects back. This create a valuable opening for countering with a light attack, which you may be able to extend into a full combo.

While the game's default block is not especially good, you can improve this ability tremendously by investing in appropriate skills like Parry and Riposte. Taking all skills that affect blocking lets Geralt block in ways that nullify damage from all but the most powerful attackers and counter instantly by simply tapping an attack button. This latter ability, Riposte, can be incredibly powerful once you learn the timing involved. Still, even when it's buffed to its highest levels, don't get in the habit of blocking a lot when fighting monsters.

Using Signs

The Polish term that is translated as "witcher" in these games, *wiedźmin*, can also be translated as "hexer." This gets at the core of what makes Geralt an unusual figure in his universe. He is one of that world's few spell-slinging swordsmen, not quite warrior or mage. While Geralt doesn't command the world-shaping power of a pure sorcerer, he can use his signs to dramatically alter the course of his battles.

That means you, the player, should become familiar with the basic signs and their combat roles. Geralt's witcher signs give him an unusual range of abilities, and it may take you some time to get comfortable with them.

Note

Using a sign consumes one bar of vigor. Geralt begins with two bars of vigor and can gain more as he levels up, depending on which skills he buys.

Aard

The sign of Aard is a single-target spell that emerges as a sphere of telekinetic force. Upon contact with a foe, it has a high chance of stunning and/or knocking it down. A stunned opponent may grow so dazed that you can finish the target off with a single attack. A knocked down opponent cannot attack you while getting back up, giving you a perfect opportunity for pouring on the damage. Knocked down opponents are also vulnerable to instant kills.

Aard is best used against enemies with strong defensive abilities that you're fighting either solo or in small groups. It is particularly useful against mages, especially when leveled up. If fighting half a dozen enemies or more, Aard is less effective. Even if it connects with your target and has a strong effect, you tend to have a hard time getting through the crush of opponents to finish off your target.

If you invest talents in leveling up Aard, you gain the ability to shoot it farther and to intensify its stunning and knockdown properties. You can also slot range mutagens to make your Aard projectiles fly farther. Aard III is so powerful that it can make many enemies in the game dramatically easier to defeat, simply by setting them up for instant kills and long combos.

Yrden

Yrden is somewhat similar to Aard in terms of function, since its main effect is stunning enemies. In addition to the stun affect, Yrden affects an enemy's movement and may hold your foe trapped in place for a few moments. What's tricky about Yrden is how you use it against opponents. You must place it on the ground and lure enemies into it, then quickly dart back and begin pummeling the foe before the effect wears off.

There are a handful of powerful enemies in the game who are essentially vulnerable only to Yrden. How Yrden is best used depends on how much you've invested in it. You can buy skills as Geralt levels up that allow him to plant multiple Yrden sigils on the ground, essentially letting him build stunning walls. This can be a powerful method of crowd control, allowing Geralt to pick the stunned enemies off at his leisure.

The weakness of Yrden is that it must be carefully placed on the ground like a trap. If you put down an Yrden sigil and can't lure an enemy onto it, the sigil is basically wasted. You can get around this by obtaining the skills necessary to put down multiple sigils, but you still need to be careful. The animation for placing a sigil is long and leaves you vulnerable to attack.

Igni

The sign of Igni launches a fireball at opponents. At its most basic level, Igni is simply a way to damage opponents from a distance. If you invest talents in enhancing Igni, then it does more damage and gains the ability to set opponents aflame. This is a critical effect called incineration that slowly deals extra damage over time.

In addition, human opponents who are incinerated jerk about in pain and become incapable of defending themselves. So in addition to inflicting ongoing damage, you can use the incineration as an opportunity to pour on extra damage with your own attack combos. You can also upgrade Igni to have a greater area of effect than a single target, which can incapacitate crowds of human foes.

Igni's main weakness is that its usefulness is limited when battling monsters. While many types of monsters are vulnerable to incineration, this critical effect doesn't disable a monster the way it disables a human. So while you can use Igni to grind out extra damage against a monster, you can't use it to set up openings for your own attacks.

Quen

Quen begins as a purely defensive spell. In a typical video game, this is an ability you'd ignore in favor of attack-oriented powers like Aard and Igni. This game is very different, though. Quen is one of the most powerful signs in the game. In *The Witcher 2*, the amount of damage enemies can do to you rapidly outscales how much damage you can soak up by blocking attacks or equipping more powerful armor.

This is where Quen comes in. Quen effectively acts as a protective barrier that absorbs attack damage. Quen lasts until the barrier has absorbed too much damage or until its timer ticks down. Each casting of Quen lasts for a certain amount of real time, a period of time you can extend by investing in the sign as you level up.

Quen won't let you wade into the middle of a half dozen enemies, but you can combine Quen and dodge rolls to keep enemies from significantly damaging Geralt at all in combat. You can make Quen absorb more damage by leveling it up and can also invest in abilities that make Quen divert damage it absorbs into an energy attack that affects one or more of your enemies, chosen at random.

Tip

Quen becomes more powerful if you use it during rainy weather.

Axii

Axii is another sign you might not expect to be useful, given how similar abilities tend to work in typical games. Axii gives you the ability to take control of one of your enemies. This sign is one of the most difficult to cast, requiring you to hold down the sign button until the spell completes. Once an enemy is under your control, it is surrounded by a white halo of light.

Once controlled, your former opponent turns on your other enemies and begins attacking them. While under the influence of Axii, this former opponent will not attack you for any reason. The spell wears out after a certain period of time, or if you attack the enemy yourself to break the spell. If you invest in Axii as Geralt levels up, you can control enemies for longer periods of time, control multiple enemies at once, and use skills to booster the strength of charmed foes for as long as they serve you.

In some games, abilities like this are available but are considered morally objectionable or outright evil. This is not the case in *The Witcher 2*. Turning a foe who was out for your blood against his or her allies is not in any way a condemnable act. While Axii works equally well against common human and monster enemies, note that it is usually ineffective against elite, unique foes. You may also find you can only use it to control enemies of a certain type only so many times in a single battle.

Witcher's Tricks

A witcher is both swordsman and mage, but doesn't rely on those skills exclusively. Witchers were bred to fight monsters, who are ruthless and inhumanly powerful foes. To compensate, witchers are taught to fight dirty and take advantage of every possible edge they can find in a fight. This philosophy is expressed in gameplay through witcher's tricks, items you can equip in Geralt's pockets and unleash against opponents in battle.

Items equipped to Geralt's pocket slots are always consumables you must find, craft, or purchase before you can use them. You have a limited supply of each trick item and may eventually run out. Most witcher's tricks are situational items that tend to be either overwhelmingly powerful or somewhat useless, depending on how well they fit the situation. A skillful player is one who knows exactly when to deploy a particular witcher's trick.

Ranged Weapons

Ranged weapons in *The Witcher 2* are different forms of thrown daggers. You don't need to be a magically enhanced mutant like a witcher to throw a dagger well, but it doesn't hurt. A thrown dagger works a bit like low-level Igni. It deals a relatively small amount of damage, usually what you might deal with one strong sword blow, to an enemy from a safe distance.

Throwing daggers can be incredibly powerful against single strong opponents, provided you have enough of them. You use steel thrown daggers against human opponents and silver thrown daggers against monster opponents. Some difficult to find and powerful throwing daggers, like stings and poisoned harpy claws, can inflict critical effects on your foes.

You do not have the ability to throw daggers in the game by default. This is a skill from the training tree that you must purchase if you wish to use it. You can invest in it further to get a damage bonus to attacking with thrown daggers. Whether or not you want to invest in this ability is purely a matter of player style. Play the dagger-throwing portion of the game's tutorial to see if you like the feel of it.

Bombs

Bombs also let Geralt attack his foes from a safe distance, though there are some major differences between ranged weapons and bombs. Generally, bombs do less pure damage than ranged weapons but can affect multiple targets. Geralt can throw bombs from the beginning of the game. Where ranged weapons often must be found or purchased, bombs can be created on the fly through alchemy.

The ideal situation for bombs is when confronting large groups of enemies. You can effectively soften up a group of foes by dodge-rolling in circles around them, tossing bombs, and then going back to dodge rolls. Certain bombs let you incinerate and stun foes, which can create openings for you to wade into the group and begin eliminating disabled foes with your own sword attacks.

The main disadvantage to bomb use is the relatively low maximum damage, though you can increase this by investing in skills from the alchemy skill tree as Geralt levels up. There's also a limited number of critical effects you can inflict through bombs. A handful of bombs do negligible damage when thrown but instead enhance the effectiveness of particular signs or increase a monster's vulnerability to critical effects.

Traps

Cross a bomb with Yrden and that gives you a trap. To use a trap, you must place it on the ground and then lure an enemy (or ideally a group of enemies) into stepping on it. Once the trap is triggered, all opponents within range take damage and may suffer from other effects. Traps are best used when you can thoroughly rig an area with traps before any enemies are present in it.

Traps can be used effectively for crowd control or to deal heavy damage to large, slow enemies. In cases like this, you can set several traps on top of each other, so the enemy takes catastrophic damage upon stepping into the trapped area. Be careful trying to place traps when lots of agile enemies are already active in an area, as they may take that opportunity to attack you. You can also be damaged by your own traps if an enemy triggers one before you've left its area of effect.

Traps can inflict critical effects as well as pure damage. Most traps you must purchase or craft before you can use them. Some traps let you inflict extremely exotic status effects, like the Talgar winter's ability to inflict the rare critical effect freeze or the Fury's ability to cause an Axii-like effect on several enemies at once.

Alchemy Boosts

Your average witcher also understands the basic principles of alchemy. His knowledge of these principles lets him blend herbs and other alchemical substances into potions and oils that can have profound effects on his body and equipment. In *The Witcher 2*, this means that you can use alchemy to create temporary boosts to your stats. Each boost works in a slightly different way.

Potions

In a typical video game, potions are items you can quaff to instantly restore lost HP, mana, or other resources. In *The Witcher 2*, you drink potions to fundamentally alter Geralt's body chemistry for a short period of time. Potions can increase Geralt's vitality and vigor regeneration, increase his resistances to critical effects, make his signs more powerful, and cause other effects.

Most potions have a standard duration of about 10 minutes. You must meditate to drink a potion, so you need to apply potion buffs before getting into combat. Once monsters are within striking range, it's too late. Potions are at their most effective in battles where you can pause at the threshold, apply your potions, and then enter battle with a significant edge.

The number of potions you can consume is limited by your total potion slots and also by Geralt's total toxicity. At the game's beginning, Geralt can drink only up to three potions at once. Each potion has a toxicity rating that indicates how much it poisons you after you drink it. You cannot drink a potion or combination of potions if doing so would boost Geralt's total toxicity over 100. You can purchase skills from the alchemy tree that let Geralt drink up to four potions (provided their toxicity combined is not greater than 100) and that also grant Geralt additional stat bonuses while his toxicity level is high.

It is difficult to use potions effectively in battles that are preceded by long story sequences or cutscenes, since potion timers count down in real time. You can invest in certain skills from the alchemy tree to make potions last longer, to increase the strength of potion buffs, and to decrease the drawbacks associated with using certain potions. In general, any player interested in using potions extensively should invest in the related skills from the alchemy tree.

Oils

Oils are alchemical substances used to coat a blade. They're prepared the same way potions are but can be applied to a blade at any time. It's a good idea to keep a store of oils on hand, in case you stumble into an unexpected battle and need to give yourself a quick edge. Oil effects generally grant you bonuses to damage or to inflicting critical effects.

When applying an oil to a blade, you must choose whether to apply it to your steel or silver sword. Many types of oils grant damage bonuses to specific types of foes, like humans or insectoids, so keep that in mind. Oil effects are dictated by real-time timers, just like potions. Oil timers usually last about five minutes but can be extended by investing in certain alchemy tree skills.

While it's easier to use oils on the fly than potions, it's worth noting that combining oils with potions can have extremely powerful effects. For instance, if you oiled your blade to make it have a 30 percent chance of causing the bleeding or poison critical effect, you could also drink potions to further increase your chances of landing these particular critical effects.

Circles

Circles aren't exactly alchemical boosts, but they work so similarly that they're worth discussing here. Basically, there are certain small areas scattered throughout the game world that grant stat boosts if you scan them with your medallion. These stat boosts typically last for about five minutes and have no cost. The only limitation on using circles is that you can only take advantage of any individual circle once per day.

Circles of life and vigor grant +2 vitality regeneration and +1 vitality regeneration in combat. Circles of endurance grant an additional 20 percent to armor. Circles of strength grant an additional 20 percent to damage. Circles of power grant an additional 20 percent to sign intensity. You know you're near a circle when you hear a distinct sound as you pass through an area. You also see a shimmering effect nearby, as if the air were superheated.

Circle effects stack with each other and with other potions and oils you've applied. Certain situations and builds can create very powerful synergies this way. You can check the guide's maps to see where circles are located. If you know you're going into a battle near a circle, it's worth your time to take advantage of it.

Critical Effects

A critical effect is effectively an additional debuff an enemy or Geralt can suffer as a result of a successful attack. Each critical effect can be inflicted by a variety of sources. Most enemies attempt to inflict stun, poison, bleeding, incineration, or knockdown. There is a sixth critical effect, freeze, that only Geralt can use.

Bleeding causes the afflicted target to take additional gradual damage to vitality over the course of five seconds. Enemies affected by bleeding glow red and spurt blood violently until the effect ceases. Bleeding is one of the easier critical effects for Geralt to resist, as several potions and many types of equipment grant bonuses to resisting it. By the same token, this is one of the critical effects to which many monsters have complete immunity.

Poison causes the afflicted target to take additional gradual damage to vitality over the course of five seconds. If Geralt is affected by it, it makes the screen go green and misty, reducing visibility. Enemies affected by poison begin to glow slightly green. You can use the Quen sign to immediately nullify being poisoned. Many different monsters resist or are completely immune to poison, though it is the sole vulnerability of trolls.

Incineration causes the afflicted target to take additional gradual damage to vitality over the course of five seconds. You can use the Quen sign to immediately nullify being incinerated. Human enemies who suffer incineration are often paralyzed by the pain and become vulnerable to further attacks. Many types of monsters are vulnerable to incineration, too. It's pretty easy to tell when Geralt or an enemy is affected by incineration, as the target bursts conspicuously into flames.

Knockdown is a relatively rare critical effect. It is inflicted by particularly strong attacks from enemies, and Geralt can inflict it through a handful of weapons and the Aard sign. An enemy that is knocked down must stand up again before it can take any other actions. During that time, the enemy is defenseless against attacks and may trigger instant kill animations if attacked. The same applies to Geralt if he is knocked down. Most flying monster types are extremely vulnerable to knockdown.

Stun is another relatively rare critical effect. No enemy in the game can consistently inflict it on Geralt. The sign of Aard, a variety of bombs, and certain weapons can inflict it on Geralt's enemies. Stun is primarily useful to Geralt for setting up instant kills. It is particularly effective against human opponents, especially mages.

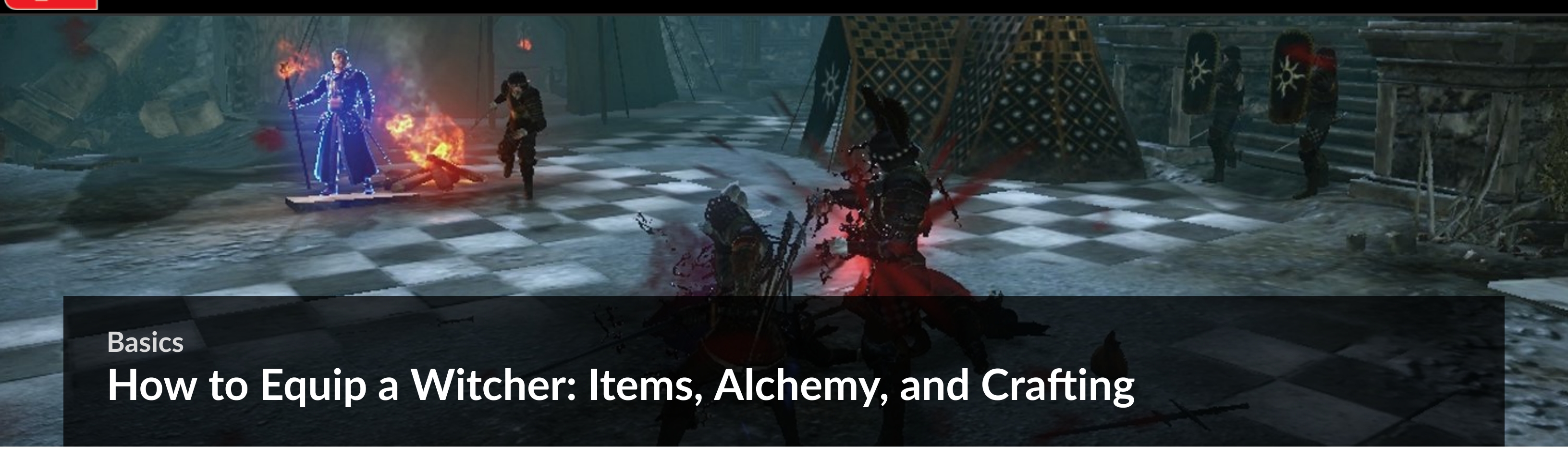
Freeze is an extremely powerful critical effect that only Geralt can inflict, but from a limited number of sources. The ranged weapon sting, the trap Talgar winter, and a handful of swords have a freeze critical affect. An enemy affected by freeze may become frozen solid, which allows Geralt to shatter them with his next attack. An enemy who is not frozen solid is still going to be drastically slowed, as if affected by the adrenaline ability Heliotrope. Freeze is especially powerful because no enemy in the game completely resists it. At the very least, most enemies that suffer from freeze will be slowed.

Adrenaline

The final major combat mechanic worth discussing is adrenaline. This does not come into play until relatively late in the game, when Geralt has acquired one (or more) of these abilities: Combat Acumen, Heliotrope, or Mutant. Acquiring one of these unlocks an adrenaline meter that slowly fills up as you do something that's relevant to the ability in question. You charge Combat Acumen by landing sword blows, Heliotrope by casting signs, and Mutant by drinking potions with high toxicity. You can also increase adrenaline generation by equipping items, primarily swords, that grant bonuses to adrenaline generation.

When your adrenaline meter is full, you can tap up on the directional pad if using a controller or X if playing the PC version and using a keyboard to activate your ability. Each ability works in a completely different way, designed to synergize with the other strengths and weaknesses developed by investing in that particular skill tree. Heliotrope, for instance, slows enemies so it's easier to use signs on them (or just beat them up). Combat Acumen lets you spend your adrenaline bar to either instantly kill an entire group of nearby humans, or to instantly kill a single nearby monster. Mutant lets Geralt go on a brief rampage where he does extremely high damage.

If you never invest in any of the skills listed above, you never unlock Geralt's adrenaline meter and it does not come into play. Leveling Geralt up this way is not recommended. The game's final chapter is largely designed presuming your Geralt build has access to at least one of the adrenaline abilities. Note that it's entirely possible, if tricky, to level Geralt up such that he learns all three of the adrenaline abilities. In this case, spending your adrenaline meter activates all three abilities simultaneously.



Basics

How to Equip a Witcher: Items, Alchemy, and Crafting

Items

Items in *The Witcher 2* work pretty much the way you'd expect. You can pick up items you find lying around as loot, purchase items from merchants, or create your own items through alchemy or crafting. Note that merchant lists are semi-randomized, so sometimes an item you can usually buy from a particular merchant won't be in stock. Each item has certain basic characteristics, like a value in orens, a weight, and a description that suits whatever the item happen to be. For a useful piece of equipment like a sword or armor, the description might list its effects or resistances. Defensive equipment items alter Geralt's basic statistics when equipped, while swords alter his statistics when unsheathed.

Certain items are quest items, which cannot be removed from your inventory. Most quest items have 0 weight, so you aren't penalized for having to carry them around. Otherwise, each item (except books and certain herbs) has a weight that builds up as you carry more and more of them in your inventory. If you carry more weight than Geralt's current maximum load, Geralt becomes encumbered. Geralt's default maximum load is 250. This stat can be increased by equipping items that boost maximum load or obtaining the Strong Back character attribute.

While encumbered, Geralt cannot run or dodge-roll. He can swing his swords in combat but is limited to slow, awkward strokes. He won't be able to make the acrobatic leaps that let him home in on a foe's location. In short, being encumbered is bad and a sign that you're carrying too many items. At this point, you should sell some items to merchants or put them into storage at the local inn. There is no real advantage to carrying around any item that can't be used freely in alchemy or combat.

The items you carry in your inventory (as well as the items in storage or in shops) are split up by category: swords, ranged weapons, armor, enhancements, potions, traps, bombs, books, trophies, mutagens, alchemy materials, crafting materials, diagrams and formulas, lures, quest items, and junk. You can tab between the categories if you only want to look at items of a specific type when buying and selling items, or when simply managing your own items. There is also an All tab that lets you look at a list of all items available in your inventory, your storage, or a merchant's inventory. This tab tends to sort items from oldest to newest, so you can glance at the All tab to see what new items you might have just picked up from a big bundle.

Swords and Armor

By far the most important items Geralt carries with him are the swords and armor he uses in combat. To be used actively in combat, an item must be equipped to one of Geralt's equipment slots. Geralt has an equipment slot for each of the following: steel sword, silver sword, armor, gauntlets, trousers, boots, trophy. Five pocket slots can be used for disposable items like traps, bombs, and ranged weapons.

You begin the game with default equipment and can acquire more by crafting it, purchasing it, or finding it as loot. As you quickly discover when you begin exploring your first town area, purchasing effective equipment of any sort is incredibly expensive. Merchants sell items at default prices that are often 10 or 20 times greater than the item's resale value.

In some games, the wisest approach to upgrading equipment is incremental. You start with something bad, buy something a little bit better, then slowly use your improved gear to earn more money, which you invest in better gear. You cannot do this in *The Witcher 2*, due to the prohibitively high costs of purchasing equipment. It is instead wiser to learn how to get by using only looted gear, while investing your orens in only the best gear you can obtain in a given area.

Ideally, you upgrade each major piece of Geralt's gear roughly once per chapter, maybe two or three times if you loot equipment that can tide you over to obtaining the best items available in a given chapter. Otherwise, focus on moving from one strong set of equipment to another. Constant minor equipment upgrades only serve to drain your resources.

Enhancements

Potions and oils temporarily boost Geralt's abilities, but it is also possible to grant him permanent boosts to his abilities by enhancing his equipment. You enhance armor by filling empty slots with armor enhancements, and you enhance swords by filling empty slots with runes. There are only five types of runes but around two dozen types of armor enhancements.

Runes can add passive effects, boost damage, or add additional critical effects to a sword. Passive effects, like the boost to sign intensity granted by a moon rune or the extra vitality granted by the earth rune, only become active when the sword is unsheathed. Damage boosts are a flat percentile boost of the basic damage range of the sword. Sun runes add a +10 percent chance of incineration to a sword while Ysgith runes add a +8 percent chance of bleeding.

While there is a greater variety of armor enhancements, their effects are more limited. All armor enhancements grant either +1 or +2 to the base armor value of a suit of armor when slotted. More powerful armor enhancements also add passive effects to Geralt's armor, which are always in effect. These can include boosts in resistances, boosts to sign damage, and vitality boosts.

Not all swords or armor can be enhanced. As a basic characteristic, each individual piece of equipment possesses a number of enhancement slots. A piece of equipment with no enhancement slots cannot be enhanced, while a piece of equipment with one slot can be enhanced once. The maximum number of slots for any piece of equipment is three.

You can slot equipment with multiples of the same type of enhancement (say, two fire runes or two steel plate enhancements). There are relatively few armor enhancements so good that you'd want to slot multiple versions of them, rather than just plopping in whatever has a +2 armor bonus. When it comes to runes, though, it is generally most efficient to slot swords with multiple copies of whatever rune suits your build best. That is, a mage build would get the most benefit from slotting a sword with three moon runes, while a swordsman or alchemist would be better served by three fire runes.

Alchemy

Geralt's modest skills as an alchemist allow him to manufacture certain items by himself, provided he has the right materials and a formula for the desired item on hand. An alchemy material contains one of the nine basic alchemical substances. Each formula combines a number of alchemical substances in a certain proportion. You can use any material that contains a substance to fulfill a formula—what really matters is achieving the correct mixture of substances.

The nine alchemical substances are:

There are two major sources of alchemy materials: herbs and monsters. Herbs that contain alchemical substances glitter faintly with magic as you pass them by. If you approach one of these herbs, you can opt to pick it by tapping the interaction button. If you scan an area, any pickable herbs in the area glow a bright orange. This can be useful for picking herbs out of dense forests or patches of weeds. Herbs respawn eventually after you gather them, usually after about a day's worth of time passes in-game.

You can harvest alchemical materials from most monsters upon their defeat. After you defeat a monster look around for a "corpse" that looks a bit like a smoking, meaty rib cage. Usually these bundles of items are easy to find, but sometimes you may need to scan with your medallion. Monster drops glow bright orange after a scan, which can help you pick them out of thick grasses. While monster drops are usually heavier than herbs, they sometimes include materials containing rarer substances like aether and fulgur.

Caution

Some monster drops can function as both quest items and alchemy items, which means it's possible to accidentally waste your quest item by brewing it into a potion or bomb. When selecting ingredients during the alchemy process, be very sure you aren't accidentally consuming something precious like troll tongue or bullvore brain.

It is also possible to craft certain alchemy items by taking ingredients to a craftsman and paying a fee. The details of this procedure are discussed in the "Crafting" section. In general, though, you shouldn't need to do this for purposes of basic alchemy. Some alchemy materials also double as crafting materials, so you tend to end up manufacturing them only for crafting purposes.

Geralt can synthesize alchemy items in any area where he can meditate, so basically in any quiet spot free of monsters, provided he has the formula on hand. Formulas can synthesize any of the bombs, oils, or potions available in the game. Some formulas can be looted, but most need to be purchased from vendors. So while being good at alchemy requires a big investment in orens to get the right formulas, it pays off later in the game by letting you synthesize certain items whenever you need them.

Crafting

Simply buying items from merchants can be prohibitively expensive. It can be much cheaper to create items by purchasing diagrams that show how they're constructed, gathering up the materials, and then paying a craftsman to make the item for you. Of course, not every item has a diagram, and some diagrams are difficult to obtain. On the other hand, almost all of the best equipment in the game can only be manufactured from a diagram with the right materials.

Most diagrams can either be found as loot or purchased from a merchant. You can obtain diagrams for basically any sort of item that isn't made primarily through alchemy. This includes equipment, consumables like traps, enhancements, and (recursively) certain common crafting materials like oil. Once you have a diagram you want to manufacture, make sure you have the materials required to craft it.

While there are certain items in the game like oil and leather that are used only in crafting, basically anything in the game can end up being required to craft a diagram. This includes many monster drops, certain runes, and in rare cases, even full pieces of equipment. Most item diagrams call for a blend of common and rarer items.

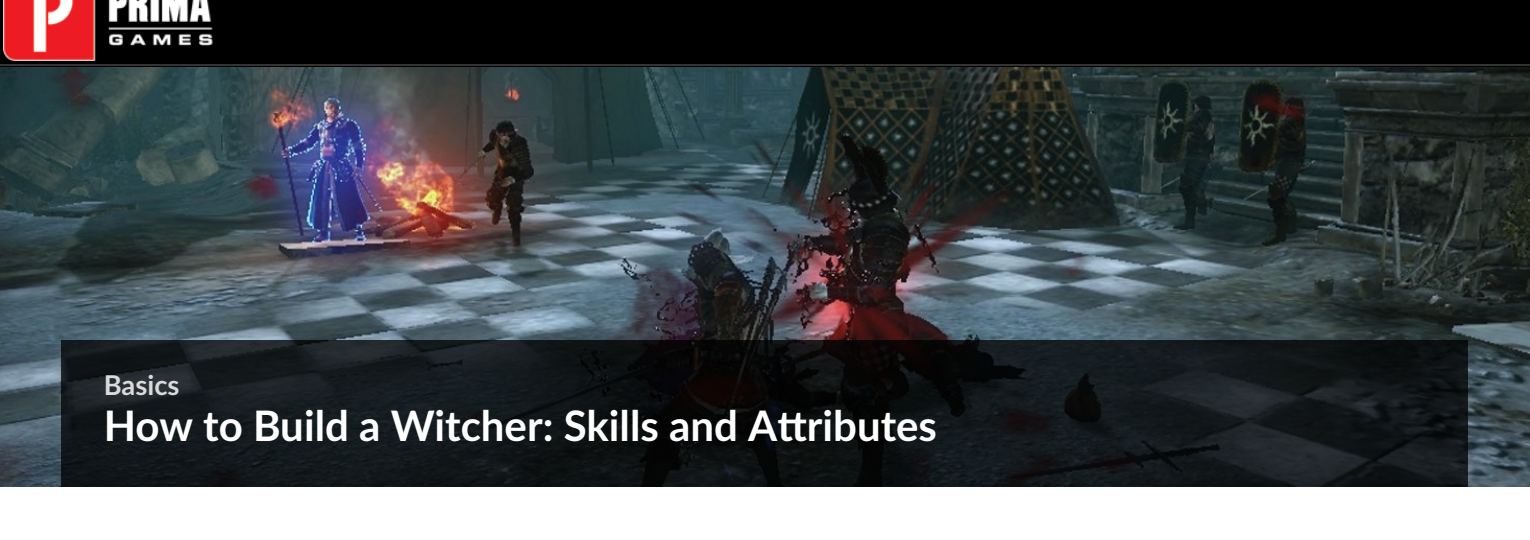
Tip

You can find a lot of crafting materials lying around towns as random loot. When arriving in a new area, it's wise to first do a sweep of every building you can enter. Simply drop everything off in storage to keep from being encumbered.

Once you have a diagram and the crafting materials it requires, find a craftsman. Craftsmen do business in settled areas and are usually marked on your in-game mini-map. Generally, while playing in the main game, you have access to one major town or city in each chapter, where a few craftsmen ply their trade. All craftsmen are also merchants, often selling a wide selection of diagrams and crafting materials. You can consult the walkthrough for specific locations and shop lists for the craftsmen available in each chapter.

Once you have a diagram, materials, and a craftsman, you can make an item. First, speak with the craftsman and ask him to create an item for you. This takes you into the game's crafting interface. Simply select the diagram you wish to craft with your confirmation button. If you have the materials required to make it in your inventory, then you can pay a fee to craft the item. Your crafting materials are consumed, but in exchange you get a new item.

It can be tremendously useful to acquire diagrams and stockpile materials necessary for crafting items you use frequently, like runes or certain armor enhancements. You also want to obtain diagrams for rarer materials required in crafting, like robust cloth, essence of water, and studded leather. Otherwise, it's best to keep an eye out for diagrams that let you make unique equipment that cannot otherwise be purchased. The items that result from these diagrams are often unusually powerful, though not necessarily better than certain rare items you find only as loot.



Basics

How to Build a Witcher: Skills and Attributes

Geralt does not quite begin the game as a blank slate, but he does begin in an undeveloped state. He has access to all of the most basic abilities a witcher can have, but none are refined. In *The Witcher 2*, you can begin with this "blank slate" Geralt and specialize his abilities in many ways.

This chapter presents a lot of advice and a variety of sample builds for Geralt, but this isn't a game where the process of leveling up and buying skills is very complicated. When playing on a standard difficulty level, you can easily make a very strong Geralt build by just figuring out what you like to do in fights and investing in skills that let you do that better.

Gaining Experience

Geralt begins the game at level 1, with 0 experience. While you can gain experience from simply defeating enemies, the experience gains you earn this way are relatively small. This is not a game where you should go out and shank some monsters when you want to make your main character stronger. Instead, you gain most of your experience (or XP) by completing quests.

Generally, completing main story quests yields the most XP. A quest may award a large amount of XP when it is resolved or stagger its XP rewards throughout the quest. In addition to main story quests, you can take on side quests. These are completely optional, skippable quests that you can try to complete while you're in a given area. Completing main story quests can make certain side quests inaccessible or cause you to fail them if you haven't completed them already.

As a further complication, getting XP isn't simply a question of blitzing through as many quests as you can between plot points. How you complete a given quest can radically change the amount of XP and other rewards it gives you. Many of the game's quests can be completed in two or three different ways, and usually one particular way ends up being worth the most XP. This isn't necessarily going to be the most challenging approach to finishing the quest. Often, what the game chooses to reward is lateral thinking and sticking to your principles once you've made a decision.

Consult the "Walkthrough" chapter for complete coverage of all quests, including the various ways of completing them and breakdowns of how to get the most XP from the decisions you can make. If you want to play the game blind and only look up information on completing specific quests, use the index to see which specific page of the walkthrough covers a particular quest.

Note

As long as you complete side quests diligently, you should never have to grind for XP in this game.

Leveling Up

The Witcher 2 uses a simple, elegant leveling system. Every time Geralt gains 1,000 XP, he levels up. He begins at level 1 and can attain a maximum level of 35. His basic statistics grow somewhat as he levels up, but the most important thing that happens when Geralt levels up is that he gets a talent to spend. You can spend a talent to unlock a new skill or to purchase a second level of a skill that's already unlocked. Since Geralt begins at level 1 with 0 talents, he can gain a maximum of 34 talents throughout the course of the game.

Before you can begin training Geralt in one of the game's three main skill trees, you must first buy skills from the training tree. You must spend six talents in the training tree before you can spend talents on skills from any other tree. The training tree offers basic utility skills that serve as a foundation to build from. If you already have a long-term goal in mind for your Geralt build, take training tree skills that reinforce your specialization plans. If you aren't quite sure what you'll be doing yet, just put points into whatever looks interesting.

Since you must always spend six talents in the training tree, you can't specialize Geralt at all until he reaches level 8. This typically happens somewhere in the middle of Chapter 1. Before you've gotten too far into Chapter 2, you need to have at least settled on a specialization or general plan for how you're spending Geralt's talents. While it's pretty hard to create a Geralt so weak he can't finish the game, spending talents in a scattershot way can result in a Geralt who begins limping through fights toward the end of Chapter 3.

Skills

This section covers all the skills available to each skill tree and how they work at both levels of investment. Some skills are perfectly useful with only one talent invested in them, while others don't really come into their own until you've spent two talents on them. If it's not entirely clear to you how a build's skills are supposed to work, just read the "Build Notes" that go along with the discussion of each skill's tree. You can also check the "Cross-Class Skills" sections to see which skills from other trees might be good complements to a given type of build.

While you can spend all 28 of your discretionary talents on one tree, it is not necessary. A truly strong Geralt build that specializes in one particular tree may have its effectiveness dramatically enhanced by spending a small number of talents on skills from another tree. A swordsman could invest a couple of points in Quen from the magic tree to help with defense, for instance, or a couple of points in Alchemist from the alchemy tree to make better use of bombs and traps.

Mutagen Slots

Certain skills have attached mutagen slots. Once you've spent a talent in gaining these skills, you can then slot mutagens that enhance Geralt's intrinsic stats. You can identify them visually in the game's character tab by looking for an empty circle near the edge of a skill bubble after purchasing a new skill. After you slot a mutagen, the bubble turns green. Which mutagen you slot won't affect how the skill works. If you respec Geralt's skills by visiting the Operator, note that any mutagens you've slotted remain even if you choose not to buy the attached skill during your respec. You can exploit this intentionally to help boost Geralt's endgame stats if you like, although it's so late in the game before you can visit the Operator that you don't get much payoff for it.

How useful or important mutagens are to your Geralt build varies wildly according to which skill tree you are investing in. The alchemy tree offers the most mutagen slots overall and is somewhat dependent on mutagens to help boost Geralt's stats. A mage build is not particularly reliant on mutagens and offers only a handful of mutagen slots. The swordsman build can get a strong shot in the arm from wise mutagen investment but can also get by without slotting any mutagens at all.

Using Mutagens

Let's go into more detail about how mutagens work so you can make good use them as a part of your build. Most Geralt builds can loot mutagens as drops from monster corpses. Most monsters drop random basic mutagens, though more powerful enemies are more likely to drop powerful mutagens. Only one enemy in the game, the queen endrega, reliably drops a certain type of mutagen (the greater vitality mutagen).

Players who purchase the Side Effect skill from the alchemy tree can also create mutagens as a side effect of crafting bombs, oils, and potions from formulas. You have a 2 percent chance of creating a mutagen through Side Effect at first level and a 10 percent chance at second level. The chance is calculated once each time you craft, regardless of how much of an item you craft. That is, your chances of generating a mutagen are no better when crafting 30 samum bombs than they are when crafting one.

There are eight types of mutagen. Most mutagens can occur in a variety of forms, indicating different strengths of the same basic mutagen. The most common arrangement is a mutagen occurring in lesser, standard,and greater forms. When slotting mutagens, wait until you've obtained the strongest possible version of it. You cannot remove or overwrite mutagens once you've slotted them. With so few slots available, it just doesn't make sense to waste your mutagen slots on inferior specimens. Consult the "Best Mutagens" table to see what is the strongest variant of each of the eight types of mutagen.

Mutagen	Effect	Best for...
Greater Enhancement Mutagen	Adrenaline generation on hitting foe +5%	Mages, swordsmen
Greater Critical Effects Mutagen	+3% to knockdown, stun, freeze, incineration, poison, bleeding	All builds
Madness Mutagen	Armor +2, vitality +5, damage bonus on signs +1	Mages, alchemists
Greater Power Mutagen	Damage +1–3	All builds
Greater Strength Mutagen	Armor +2, vitality regeneration +1	All builds
Greater Vitality Mutagen	Vitality +10	All builds
Concentration Mutagen	Damage bonus on signs +1	Builds that use signs regularly
Range Mutagen	Sign range Aard and Igni +5%	Builds with enhanced Aard sign

The table identifies builds that can take particular advantage of a given type of mutagen's stat boosts. Speaking broadly, though, most mutagens can be used effectively by any type of build. Stat boosts like more vitality, armor bonuses, critical effect increases, and extra damage are going to help regardless of how you buy skills. Often, your mutagen choices reflect what you happen to obtain in your game just as much as what's actually optimal for your build.

For alchemists, the ability to get both Side Effect and the Impregnation skill, which boosts mutagen effects, radically changes the way you approach mutagens. An alchemist Geralt ends up with big piles of strong mutagens at his disposal and can afford to be especially picky about using them. Alchemists should hoard the madness mutagen, which grants simultaneous boosts to armor, vitality, and sign damage. This effectively combines the effects of the power, strength, and concentration mutagens, making it an extremely efficient way to boost Geralt's stats.

Using Potions

As you begin building up your own version of Geralt, give some thought to what types of potions would work best to buff your strengths. You want to obtain the right potion formulas for supporting your build as early in the game as you can, but formulas are expensive. You don't want to waste orens on formulas for potions you never use or spend a lot of time drinking potions that don't give you the buffs you need. Note that some potions have drawbacks that are best balanced by drinking a complementary potion.

Potion Effect	Corresponding Potions	Best for...
Boosts incineration, poison, and bleeding	Brock, Wolf	All
Vitality regeneration	Gadwall, Swallow	Swordsmen, alchemists
Resistance to poison, incineration, and bleeding	Golden Oriole	Mages
Vigor regeneration	Lapwing, Tawny Owl	Mages
Maximum vigor	Maribor Forest	Mages
Immunity to Poison	Mongoose	All
Damage bonus on signs	Petri's Philtre, Stammelford's Philtre	Mages
Damage bonus	Rook, Thunderbolt	Swordsmen, alchemists
Armor bonus	Tiara, Virga	Mages, alchemists
Maximum vitality	White Raffard's Decoction	Swordsmen, alchemists

Note that how you use potions is completely different when playing as an alchemist than it is when using other builds. If you've taken the Catalysis skill, then all potions have greater advantages and fewer drawbacks. The only potions really worth skipping as an alchemist are potions that primarily serve to increase vigor regeneration, as a typical alchemist build doesn't burn through vigor the way a mage or a defensive swordsman can. As an alchemist, focus on drinking the potions that give the biggest overall stat boosts. You can basically ignore drawbacks, which will be reduced to the point of being negligible once you have Catalysis.

Training Tree

Skill	Mutagen Slot?	Level 1	Level 2	Unlocks
Vigor Regeneration	No	Vigor regeneration while out of combat +25%	Vigor regeneration while in combat +25%	Parrying
Hardiness	No	Vitality +10	Vitality +50	Parrying
Dagger Throwing	No	Unlocks the ability to throw daggers	Damage dealt by daggers +20	Parrying
Parrying	No	Unlocks the ability to parry blows from all directions	Damage reduction while parrying 50%	Arrow RedirectionFortitude
Arrow Redirection	Yes	Unlocks the ability to redirect arrows	Unlocks the ability to redirect arrows toward the shooter	—
Fortitude	Yes	Vigor regeneration during combat +10%	Vigor +1	—

Build Notes

Avoid spending a talent on **Vigor Regeneration** unless you intend to invest a second talent in it. A +25 percent bonus to vigor regeneration in combat is great for mages and swordsmen, while +25 percent vigor regeneration out of combat isn't really useful at all.

Hardiness is recommended for alchemists but isn't a great way for other builds to spend talents.

Two points in **Dagger Throwing** is one of the best talent investments you can make in the training tree. The ability to throw daggers is useful to most builds. High-end daggers do a base 50–70 points of damage, and the flat +20 damage bonus means a high-end thrown dagger does at least 70 points of damage before armor resistance kicks in. For comparison, the forgotten vran sword, one of the best steel swords in the game, does base damage of 50–55 points.

Two points in **Parrying** is a great skill buy for aspiring swordsmen builds. Any build can make use of one point, though.

Arrow Redirection is a quirky skill that can be very useful in the hands of swordsmen, provided you take two levels of it. With two levels of Arrow Redirection, you can easily cause an archer or arbalist to kill himself with his own ammunition just by blocking.

Two points in **Fortitude** is a great buy for aspiring mages, who need all the vigor they can get to remain effective. One point in Fortitude can be helpful to all builds.

Swordsmanship Tree

Skill	Mutagen Slot?	Level 1	Level 2	Unlocks
Position	No	Damage taken by backstab reduced to 150%	Damage taken by backstab reduced to 100%	Violence
Riposte	No	Tap the light attack button while blocking if you see the riposte prompt to counterattack for heavy damage	Chance of instant kill +10% when countering with Riposte	Guard
Feet Work	No	Dodge distance +100%	Dodge distance +200%	Schemer
Violence	No	Sword damage +5%	Sword damage +15%	Whirl
Whirl	No	Sword attacks deal 50% damage to secondary targets within range	Sword attacks deal 100% damage to secondary targets within range	ViolenceHardy
Guard	No	Vigor required to block -25%	Vigor required to block -50%	Tough Guy
Tough Guy	No	Damage reduction +5%	Damage reduction +15%	GuardSchemerHardy
Schemer	No	Vigor regeneration in combat +10%	Vigor regeneration in combat +40%	Tough Guy
Hardy	No	Vitality +25	Vitality +100	WhirlTough GuyPrecisionSudden DeathFinesse
Precision	No	Bleeding +10%	Bleeding +20%Sword damage +5%	Invincible
Sudden Death	No	Chance of instant kill +2%	Chance of instant kill +5%	Invincible
Finesse	No	All critical effects chance +5%	All critical effects chance +15%	Invincible
Invincible	Yes	Vitality +50Damage reduction +5%	Vitality +150Damage reduction +15%	Combat Acumen
Combat Acumen	Yes	Adrenaline ability: group finisherSword blows generate adrenaline	Damage +10%Damage taken -10%	Whirlwind
Whirlwind	Yes	Adrenaline generation +10%All resistances +10%All critical effects chance +10%	Adrenaline generation +30%All resistances +20%All critical effects chance +20%	—

Build Notes

The swordsmanship tree is probably the game's most robust overall skill tree. There are no bad ways to spend your talents, and few skills are even appreciably weaker than the others. You almost can't go wrong by spending on swordsmanship skills. Players making their first trip through the game are encouraged to invest in this tree heavily, since swordsmanship builds are easy to use well. That said, the closest thing to a truly bad decision you can make when buying swordsmanship skills is picking up only one point of **Precision**. Bleeding just isn't very useful as a critical effect. Even Precision is worthwhile at its second level, though, since it grants another flat bonus to sword damage.

Several swordsmanship tree skills completely alter the way Geralt handles in the game. The most obvious of these is **Feet Work**, which makes your dodge roll faster and extends its reach. The other major skill of this type is **Riposte**, which gives Geralt an automatic counterattacking ability that can completely change your approach to fighting human foes. Investing in a second level of Riposte and other skills that increase the chance of instant kill can turn Geralt into a nigh-invincible turtle that has a good chance of one-shotting any human opponent who tries to take a swing at him, provided his vigor holds out. You can reinforce this fighting style by investing in **Guard** and **Schemer**.

The adrenaline skill the swordsmanship tree grants is Combat Acumen, which lets you spend a full adrenaline bar to use a group finisher on any nearby humans or to execute an immediate instant kill on the nearest monster. Combat Acumen does not work against unique enemies, but does work against rare foes like elemental golems and gargoyles. If you want to use Combat Acumen to eliminate humans, try to make sure you're in the middle of a large group of enemies first. Combat Acumen gives a swordsmanship build an incredible ability to control crowds of human enemies, especially when you combine it with other skills like Whirl and Whirlwind.

Cross-Class Skills

- **Enhanced Aard Sign:** Lets a swordsman quickly stun and knock down troublesome enemies like combat mages, making it possible to defeat them with a single blow. Can stun certain unique enemies and create openings for dealing damage.
- **Enhanced Quen Sign:** Swordsmen tend to wade into the thick of a group of enemies and can really benefit from the extra defense Quen provides. Amping up Quen with a couple of points in the **Venting** skill means that enemies just damage themselves whenever they try to attack you, too.
- **Alchemist:** On top of giving swordsmen another crowd-control option, the skills that enhance chances of critical effects synergize nicely with the effects of bombs like the Zerrikanian sun and traps like the Talgar winter.
- **Synthesis:** High vitality turns a swordsman into an unstoppable juggernaut. If you've taken all the swordsmanship abilities that boost vitality and still need more, two points invested in Synthesis can offer a swordsman a hefty additional bonus.

Sample Build: Swordsman

Level	Skill	Level	Skill
1	—	19	Finesse
2	Vigor Regeneration	20	Invincible
3	Parry	21	Combat Acumen
4	Fortitude	22	Whirlwind
5	Fortitude	23	Whirlwind
6	Parry	24	Combat Acumen
7	Vigor Regeneration	25	Invincible
8	Feet Work	26	Finesse
9	Feet Work	27	Hardy
10	Position	28	Whirl
11	Position	29	Violence
12	Riposte	30	Tough Guy
13	Riposte	31	Tough Guy
14	Guard	32	Sudden Death
15	Guard	33	Sudden Death
16	Violence	34	Precision
17	Whirl	35	Precision
18	Hardy		

This sample build is an extremely straightforward one that doesn't splash in any cross-class abilities. It is designed for players new to the game, who tend to favor a defensive style. This build invests talent heavily in the swordsmanship build's many defensive abilities at low levels and emphasizes defensive abilities in the training tree as well. At low levels, this build can be boosted by use of the basic Quen sign, dancing star bombs, and basic potions to help Geralt survive grueling early-game battles. Abilities that speed up vigor regeneration make relying on Riposte in battles with human opponents a more viable option.

At level 16, which is usually early in Chapter 2, this build pivots from a defensive emphasis to a growing emphasis on offense abilities. At this point in the game, a new player should be growing bolder and feeling more confident. Going as directly as possible from Violence to Combat Acumen helps give the player access to group finishers right at the point in the game where they become hugely useful. From there, the build further invests in abilities that enhance its offensive capabilities. At level 35, this build is so difficult to damage that it can ignore Quen on lower difficulties. It defeats most enemies with only a few blows and inflicts critical effects and instant kills very frequently.

Making this build work well even at early levels doesn't demand a lot of situational knowledge about the game's major battles or constant reliance on use of potions, signs, and witcher's tricks. This can make it ideal for a new player who finds all of the game's options a bit overwhelming. This build allows a player to focus on more familiar elements of gameplay like dodging, blocking, and dealing damage through pure, overwhelming sword blows. Veteran players more comfortable with advanced strategy can probably find all sorts of ways to strengthen the build's effectiveness, through use of unusual bombs like stenchbulb, high-end potion combinations, and more aggressive investment in cross-class skills.

Magic Tree

Skill	Mutagen Slot?	Level 1	Level 2	Unlocks
Enhanced Aard Sign	No	Unlocks Aard sign level IISign range +2m	Unlocks Aard sign level IIIAard sign affects entire areasSign range +6m	Enhanced Quen Sign
Destructive Magic	No	Sign damage +5	Sign damage +10Vigor +1	Enhanced Quen Sign
Enhanced Axii Sign	No	Unlocks Axii sign level IIBewitched opponent gets:+20% vitality+20% damage	Unlocks Axii sign level IIIBewitched opponent gets: +50% vitality+50% damage	Enhanced Quen Sign
Enhanced Quen Sign	No	Unlocks Quen sign level IIQuen now deflects 20% damageSign duration +20 seconds	Unlocks Quen sign level IIIQuen now deflects 50% damageSign duration +60 seconds	Magic IntensificationVentingMagical Vigor
Magic Intensification	No	Sign intensity +1	Sign intensity +2Damage reduction +5%	Enhanced Quen SignFatal Attraction
Venting	No	Quen transfers deflected damage to up to two opponents	Quen transfers deflected damage to up to three opponents	Enhanced Quen SignEnhanced Igni Sign
Fatal Attraction	No	Axii sign can now bewitch two opponents at once	Axii sign can now bewitch three opponents at once	Magic IntensificationMagical VigorEnhanced Yrden Sign
Magical Vigor	No	Vigor +1	Vigor +2	Fatal AttractionEnhanced Igni SignEnhanced Yrden Sign
Enhanced Igni Sign	No	Unlocks Igni sign level IIIgni can inflict incinerationSign range +3m	Unlocks Igni sign level IIIIgni now has area effectSign range +6m	VentingMagical VigorEnhanced Yrden Sign
Enhanced Yrden Sign	Yes	Unlocks Yrden sign level IICan lay down two Yrden sigils	Unlocks Yrden sign level IIICan lay down three Yrden sigils	Fatal AttractionEnhanced Igni SignGlyph EnhancementEnergy FlowMagical Life Force
Glyph Enhancement	No	Impassable links form between Yrden sigils	Links between Yrden sigils deal 5 damage per second	Sense of Magic
Energy Flow	No	Critical effects chance from signs +5%	Critical effects chance from signs +25%	Sense of Magic
Magical Life Force	No	Vitality +50	All resistances +5%	Sense of Magic
Sense of Magic	Yes	Adrenaline ability: HeliotropeUsing signs generates adrenaline	All resistances +5%Signs generate +50% adrenaline	Control Over the Power
Control Over the Power	Yes	All resistances +20%Sign damage +3Signs generate +10% adrenaline	All resistances +50%Sign damage +10Signs generate +75% adrenaline	—

Build Notes

The magic tree is for gamers who typically prefer spell-slinging to sword-swinging, though it's worth noting that spells in *The Witcher 2* are poor sources of direct damage. You can't go through the game simply throwing fireballs at everything—you will absolutely have to use your swords to damage enemies. What mages specialize in is stunning and weakening foes, so Geralt can get one-shot kills or other sorts of easy victories over his opponents.

Mage builds tend to be fragile early in the game if they don't invest in Quen, but they blossom in the mid-to-late game as they acquire more high-level spells and stat bonuses. The magic tree has difficulty with crowd control, even with full investments in Axii or Yrden, and a mage build needs to acquire **Sense of Magic** as soon as possible to provide a fallback in brutal fights against lots of opponents. Mage builds often excel in fights against lone enemies, where they can use signs to exploit weaknesses, bolster defense, and lock down attacks.

The difficulty of building a strong mage is in making sure Geralt has enough vigor that he can cast spells regularly. While the magic tree includes abilities that increase Geralt's maximum amount of vigor, it does not grant any abilities that speed up vigor regeneration. A mage build benefits greatly from the training tree's vigor-related abilities and from regular use of potions that speed up vigor regeneration. Potions and oils that increase damage are also useful to mages, since most of the best magic tree spells focus not on damaging enemies directly, but instead on disabling them somehow. Even a Geralt build with a heavy investment in Axii eventually needs to be able to defeat some opponents by himself.

The adrenaline skill the magic tree grants is Sense of Magic, which allows Geralt to spend a full adrenaline bar to cast the sixth sign, Heliotrope. This spell creates a wide, dome-shaped area of effect in which time slows around Geralt. This gives Geralt a tremendous edge in handling large groups of foes, since he still moves at his normal speed. When Heliotrope is in effect, it becomes profoundly easy to dodge-roll around opponents and annihilate them with combos from the back. Your enemies won't be able to move fast enough to defend themselves against you or regularly land attacks. In fact, an attacking foe becomes a sitting duck, trapped in a long and drawn-out animation.

Cross-Class Skills

- **Feet Work:** Mobility is invaluable to mage builds, who are too fragile to handle being trapped in a corner or in the thick of an enemy group. A couple of points in Feet Work gives Geralt a huge advantage when it comes to getting into an ideal position for spellcasting.
- **Position:** Mage builds often rely on Quen for defense, leaving them extremely vulnerable to damage once their vigor runs out. A point or two invested in Position makes these moments less deadly by reducing the damage bonuses granted to enemies who attack you from behind.
- **Alchemist:** Most mage builds don't have effective means of crowd control available until around the halfway point of the game. Even then, running out of vigor shuts most of these options down. Dropping a point or two into Alchemist lets the mage fall back on bombs and traps for crowd control.
- **Synthesis:** The mage tree offers very few vitality bonuses, which can create a dangerous situation when a mage runs out of vigor. Investing a couple of points in Synthesis helps make a mage build a bit more survivable.

Sample Build: Mage

Level	Skill	Level	Skill
1	—	19	Control Over the Power
2	Vigor Regeneration	20	Sense of Magic
3	Vigor Regeneration	21	Magical Vigor
4	Dagger Throwing	22	Magical Vigor
5	Parrying	23	Magical Life Force
6	Fortitude	24	Energy Flow
7	Fortitude	25	Energy Flow
8	Enhanced Aard Sign	26	Enhanced Yrden Sign
9	Enhanced Aard Sign	27	Glyph Enhancement
10	Enhanced Quen Sign	28	Glyph Enhancement
11	Enhanced Quen Sign	29	Enhanced Axii Sign
12	Venting	30	Enhanced Axii Sign
13	Venting	31	Fatal Attraction
14	Enhanced Igni Sign	32	Fatal Attraction
15	Enhanced Yrden Sign	33	Enhanced Igni Sign
16	Magical Life Force	34	Enhanced Igni Sign
17	Sense of Magic	35	Magic Intensification
18	Control Over the Power		

This build is designed to give players amped-up versions of all of the major signs to play with, while making the mage more survivable by unlocking and enhancing Sense of Magic and Control Over the Power as soon as possible. While this build tops out at five bars of vigor, it regenerates spent vigor relatively quickly and should let most players cast as much magic as they like without running out too quickly. Stat-wise, this build is fragile and very reliant on Quen for defense and Enhanced Aard Sign for getting quick kills. Energy Flow further amps up Enhanced Aard Sign, letting it stun entire groups of enemies at once and set them up for one-shot kills.

Its main crowd control option aside from Heliotrope (which it can cast frequently) is going to be Enhanced Yrden Sign with Glyph Enhancement. Geralt can use this ability to construct impassable barriers in choke points, then stand behind them and throw daggers, bombs, or even other spells (such as Enhanced Axii Sign) at enemies. This aspect of the build takes time to blossom fully. Throughout the game, using full arrays of potions to enhance Geralt's vitality regeneration, resistances, and vigor regeneration is a must when preparing for long battles that can't be settled by a single shot of Heliotrope.

This build can be used on a first pass through the game by a player who is talented at figuring out which spell best suits a situation, or who simply enjoys experimenting with spells enough that he or she doesn't mind dying a few times while figuring out the best approach to a fight. Otherwise, it is best suited to a player who is going through the game a second time and has a rough idea of how enemies behave and where a map's good choke points are. Obtaining strong equipment is essential with this build, as it gets no abilities that boost sword damage and very few abilities that boost Geralt's defensive stats. This is balanced out by the many ways it can totally neutralize its enemies.

Alchemy Tree

Skill	Mutagen Slot?	Level 1	Level 2	Unlocks
Alchemist	No	Bomb damage +30%Trap damage +50%	Bomb damage +70%Trap damage +70%	Side Effect
Synthesis	No	Vitality +20	Vitality +80	Specialization: Potions
Side Effect	No	+2% chance to create mutagens as a byproduct during alchemy	+10% chance to create mutagens as a byproduct during alchemy	Harvester
Specialization: Potions	No	Potion duration +10%	Potion duration +40%	Harvester
Harvester	No	Alchemical ingredients harvested +50%	Alchemical ingredients harvested +100%	Side EffectSpecialization: PotionsCatalysisSpecialization: Oils
Catalysis	No	Positive effects of potions +15%Negative effects of potions -30%	Positive effects of potions +35%Negative effects of potion -80%	—
Specialization: Oils	No	Oil duration +10%	Oil duration +40%	ImpregnationTransmutationTaster
Impregnation	No	Mutagen effects +15%	Mutagen effects +80% to +35%	TransmutationTaster
Transmutation	No	+15% to oil effects	+35% to oil effects	ImpregnationMetathesis
Taster	No	Can consume four potions at once	Damage reduction while poisoned -10%	ImpregnationMetathesis
Condensation	Yes	Vigor regeneration while poisoned +15%	Vigor regeneration while poisoned +40%	Mutant
Metathesis	Yes	Damage dealt when poisoned +5%	Damage dealt when poisoned +25%	CondensationBerserker
Berserker	Yes	Chance of instant kill while poisoned +1%	Chance of instant kill while poisoned +3%	Mutant
Mutant	Yes	Adrenaline ability: berserk modeGenerate adrenaline while poisoned	Adrenaline generated while poisoned +25%	Amplification
Amplification	Yes	Adrenaline generated while poisoned +15%Damage done while poisoned +5%Damage taken while poisoned -5%	Adrenaline generated while poisoned +50%Damage done while poisoned +15%Damage taken while poisoned -15%	—

Build Notes

Builds that emphasize the alchemy skill tree are not for the faint of heart or first-time players. The alchemy skill tree offers significant power, but powers that are almost entirely situational. Before you can really take advantage of any of the skills offered by the alchemy tree, you need a very solid understanding of how the game's various mechanics work and how to maximize the benefits the alchemy skill tree offers. An alchemist build can be, overall, just as effective as any mage or swordsman build, but only if the player knows how to properly exploit all of the skills at his or her disposal. Playing an alchemist well can also be challenging from a financial standpoint, since it requires a huge up-front investment in formulas and diagrams.

The core of an alchemist build is going to be use of potions and high-end mutagens to confer enormous stat boosts. An alchemist should always purchase both levels of **Impregnation** before slotting any mutagens. Note that Impregnation's effects are not retroactive, and you will not gain any bonuses to mutagens you slotted beforehand. Skills relating to bombs, traps, and oils should be taken early in the game to give the alchemist a fallback in situations where potions are difficult to use. Both levels of **Harvester** are also an essential investment, both for helping to generate lots of alchemical materials and for generating lots of monster drops that can be sold off early in the game to help fund necessary investments in formulas. Both levels of **Catalysis** are highly recommended, to minimize the drawbacks of powerful potions.

The alchemist's adrenaline ability is **Mutant**, a power that lets the player send Geralt into a berserk state where he deals extremely heavy damage to foes for an extremely short period of time, around 15 seconds. Alchemists generate adrenaline primarily through drinking potions and keeping their toxicity high. This means that during combat, so long as the alchemist has any toxicity at all, Geralt's adrenaline meter is going to slowly and passively creep up regardless of what he's actually doing. Several key alchemist abilities that enhance damage and critical effects also key off of high toxicity, making his berserk rages even more terrifyingly powerful.

Alchemist builds have the easiest time generating adrenaline of any of the builds, but are also the most completely reliant on constantly gaining and expending adrenaline for effectiveness. Where mages ultimately have many tricks at their disposal, alchemists at heart just chug potions and hope they get strong enough to steamroll enemies. An alchemist with access to high-end potions and strong mutagens, however, can make Geralt's stats ridiculously high, so that on lower difficulties he's functionally invincible to even the most powerful enemies in the game. Even on Hard difficulty, you should find that enemy damage output can have a very hard time keeping up with an alchemist's ability to buff effectively.

Cross-Class Skills

- **Enhanced Quen Sign:** Alchemists can be a little fragile early in the game, when they're strapped for cash and only beginning to enhance potion effects. Quen III can go a long way toward helping an alchemist survive the game's grueling early challenges.
- **Enhanced Axii Sign:** An alchemist can use the red haze bomb to make Axii easier and faster to cast. Combine this with a few points spent in Axii to create a witcher who can trivially seize control of groups of enemies.
- **Feet Work:** Early in the game, an alchemist can use Feet Work to rapidly escape from terrifying groups of enemies. Later in the game, use it to chase down terrified groups of enemies.
- **Riposte:** An alchemist has relatively limited uses for vigor and can boost the chance of instant kills while poisoned. A few points of Riposte can help make key battles in Chapter 2 much easier.

Sample Build: Alchemist

Level	Skill	Level	Skill
1	—	19	Mutant
2	Hardiness	20	Amplification
3	Hardiness	21	Condensation
4	Parrying	22	Amplification
5	Dagger Throwing	23	Mutant
6	Arrow Redirection	24	Berserker
7	Fortitude	25	Metathesis
8	Alchemist	26	Catalysis
9	Side Effect	27	Catalysis
10	Side Effect	28	Specialization: Potions
11	Harvester	29	Specialization: Potions
12	Harvester	30	Taster
13	Specialization: Oils	31	Transmutation
14	Impregnation	32	Transmutation
15	Impregnation	33	Specialization: Oils
16	Taster	34	Synthesis
17	Metathesis	35	Synthesis
18	Berserker		

This build is going to be very fragile throughout Chapter 1 but should come into its own in Chapter 2. Early in the game, this build trades off immediate sources of power for investments that pay off in later levels. Splashing one point each into Arrow Redirection and Fortitude opens up mutagen slots that become extremely valuable after both levels of Side Effect and Impregnation are in play. Two levels of Harvester taken in the early game can also help an alchemist deal with the severe cash flow problems that can occur during Chapter 1, due to the expense of necessary formulas and diagrams. Alchemist and Specialization: Oils should help keep early-game tasks manageable.

This build begins to blossom after it takes both levels of Impregnation and can begin slotting mutagens. Talents invested beginning at level 19 open up powerful abilities that make the alchemist increasingly powerful whenever Geralt goes into battle while dosed up with potions. Investments in Catalysis and Specialization: Potions amplify this exponential rise in power, as does further investment in abilities like Taster, Metathesis, and Berserker. Relatively early in Chapter 3 or possibly even late in Chapter 2, this build has come into its own and can deal tremendous damage in battles of any sort, provided Geralt can drink potions first.

Points invested late in the game are essentially in backup abilities like Transmutation that help deal with situations where Geralt cannot possibly keep his potions going throughout an entire battle. These situations are rare, though they do include some crucial optional fights. Overall, though, if the alchemist build is in the hands of a player skillful enough to survive a devastating early game, it can turn into a damage-dealer that's extremely powerful.

Jack-of-All-Trades

Level	Skill	Level	Skill
1	—	19	Enhanced Yrden Sign
2	Hardiness	20	Magical Life Force
3	Hardiness	21	Sense of Magic
4	Parry	22	Synthesis
5	Parry	23	Specialization: Potions
6	Arrow Redirection	24	Harvester
7	Fortitude	25	Specialization: Oils
8	Feet Work	26	Taster
9	Schemer	27	Metathesis
10	Tough Guy	28	Berserker
11	Hardy	29	Mutant
12	Finesse	30	Whirlwind
13	Invincible	31	Amplification
14	Combat Acumen	32	Control Over the Power
15	Enhanced Axii Sign	33	Whirlwind
16	Enhanced Quen Sign	34	Amplification
17	Magical Vigor	35	Control Over the Power
18	Fatal Attraction		

Build Notes

It cannot be emphasized enough that this build is not recommended for players picking up the game for the first time. In some ways it's not really a recommended build, as it trades off a lot of useful early-game skills in exchange for, basically, performing a late-game party trick. It's one hell of a party trick, though, and worth pointing out as an example of what you can achieve with careful character building in this game.

The jack-of-all-trades build is designed specifically to acquire all three of the game's adrenaline abilities. Once you've successfully invested talents in **Combat Acumen**, **Sense of Magic**, and **Mutant**, you can activate all three at once by spending your adrenaline meter. This means that for the cost of one adrenaline bar, you instantly kill everything around you, slow time around Geralt, and then get about 15 seconds to go on a mass-damage killing spree. You can take advantage of Heliotrope's relatively long duration to finish off anything that somehow still survives.

You make significant trade-offs for pulling off this trick. Although you can generate adrenaline using all three methods (landing sword blows, drinking potions, and casting signs), you aren't going to be especially good at any of them. You end up generating adrenaline slower than a swordsman or alchemist, though you get much more bang for your proverbial buck. Your build is going to suffer a bit in the early game and midgame, since it's still gathering steam when others are beginning to unleash their full potential. You'll be more fragile at the end of the game than a swordsman or alchemist would be, though this is offset by having 12 open slots for mutagens.

The drawbacks of this build aren't anything that a player with sharp reflexes and a thorough knowledge of the game can't handle. You can adapt this build in all sorts of ways, to create your own personal über-build for Geralt. Maybe you want to use it as a template for creating a build that focuses on two skill trees instead of all three. Use the sample builds provided in this guide as templates to help you create a Geralt build that perfectly fits your own preferences and fighting style.

Character Attributes

We've covered how you can customize Geralt through talents and skills in exhaustive detail, but there's another, entirely separate way you can make your Geralt more distinct. As you progress through the game and complete tasks, the things you do can unlock certain character attributes for Geralt. Each attribute usually has a name evocative of what you did to unlock it and grants you a new stat bonus or other ability. Some attributes are basically just novelties, while others are so useful that it's almost not worth playing the game without them.

A complete list of the game's character attributes and how you unlock them is included here. As you read over it, note that some attributes are mutually exclusive. Attributes you pick up by doing things while allied with Roche, for example, can't be acquired if you decide to ally with Iorveth instead. Some attributes are easily obtained by sticking to the main story quests, while others require you to go on side quests. A handful of attributes, some among the most powerful, require you to take very specific actions at specific times.

Attribute Name	Effect	How to Get It
Anatomy Lesson	Damage to humans +10%	Examine the fresh corpse in the Dwarven Catacombs as part of the side quest With Flickering Heart.
Arcane Knowledge	Sign intensity +0.5	Complete the side quest The Gargoyle Contract.
Assassin	Damage +25% when attacking opponents from behind	Find the assassin who resembles but is legally distinct from Altair during the Prologue.
Axii Sign Hex	Makes Axii more effective when used in conversations	Select and successfully use a dialogue option that requires use of the Axii sign in any conversation.
Batter	Chance to instant kill with redirected arrows +20%	Buy both levels of the skill Arrow Redirection and redirect approximately 10 arrows back at your enemies.
Battle Seasoned	Vigor regeneration in combat +5%	Finish the main story quest Vergen Besieged.
Birdman	Damage to harpies +10%	Complete the side quest The Harpy Contract.
Child of the Night	Vitality regeneration at night +2	Sneak through the Kaedweni Camp undetected during the main story quest Where Is Triss Merigold? .
Conjuror	Sign damage +3	Successfully use Axii Sign Hex on an NPC during a conversation.
Cover	Damage reduction +10%	Escape the Scoia'tael with Triss and Roche at the beginning of Chapter 1.
David	Damage to large monsters +10%	Kill the golem in the kingslayers' hideout in Chapter 2.
Executioner	Chance to instant kill +1%	Slay Aryan La Valette, Adam Pangratt, and Henselt of Kaedwen. Note that this is only possible if you side with Roche.
Exorcist	Damage to wraiths +10%	Finish the main story quest The Blood Curse.
Experienced	Bonus of +10% to all XP earned	Knock down 10 training dummies.
Haggling	20% off at all merchants	Use the Axii sign hex to convince the merchant to double your fee during the side quest The Kayran: A Matter of Price. Complete the main story quest The Kayran, then return to the merchant to collect your fee.
Half-Pirouette	Resistance to all critical effects +10%	Defeat Letho during the main story quest The Assassins of Kings in Chapter 1.
Intimidate	Makes intimidation more effective when used in conversations	Select and successfully use a dialogue option that requires intimidation in any conversation.
Parry	10% chance of performing an automatic riposte after blocking a blow	Successfully use Riposte at least 10 times.
Persuasion	Makes persuasion more effective when used in conversations	Select and successfully use a dialogue option that requires persuasion in any conversation.
Pyromaniac	Bonus of +20% to current chance of inflicting incineration	Set yourself on fire without dying at least 15 times.
Resistance to Magic	Damage reduction from magic attacks +20%	Reject Triss in the elven baths and blow down the false wall with Aard to escape in Where Is Triss Merigold?.
Sapper	Chance of avoiding damage from traps and bombs +50%	Interrupt Geralt at least five times while he is in the process of arming or disarming a trap.
Strong Back	Geralt's maximum load +50	Spare Aryan La Valette and then help him escape from La Valette Castle during the Prologue.
Strong Stomach	Resistance to poison +10%	Complete The Kayran: Ostmurk and drink a Mongoose potion before slaying the kayran.
Swordsman	Damage when using a sword +4	Successfully defend Henselt from the kingslayers during the main quest The Assassins of Kings in Chapter 2.
Thrower	Damage dealt by daggers +5	Defeat Ves in the knife-throwing competition during the side quest Hung Over.
Toxic Blood	Chance opponents that damage Geralt will be poisoned +30%	Survive having the poison critical effect inflicted on you at least 15 times.

Basics

Cast of Characters

Geralt of Rivia

Some might call him the hero of the story, but Geralt would insist that he is a mere protagonist. Geralt would say that a hero must be a good and admirable man, you see, and he is neither. He is a witcher, an orphan exposed to potent magics at a young age and mutated into a being stronger, faster, and more long-lived than an ordinary man. He is an expert with his sword, as are all witchers trained in the School of the Wolf at Kaer Morhen. Geralt survived exposure to some of the strongest mutagenic substances, though the experience turned his hair stark white when he was only a boy. For this reason, he is called the White Wolf by friend and foe alike.

Given the alias "Geralt of Rivia," once this nameless orphan grew into a man he took to the Path and wandered the world, seeking monsters to slay and curses to break in return for pay. He is hated and feared as a mutant by those he protects, and as a result has a rather hard time making his trade a profitable one. The temptation of money has, more than once, led Geralt into situations that compromise his famed insistence on neutrality. This is how, even though Geralt says he forswears politics, he ended up serving as a bodyguard at the court of King Foltest of Temeria. He wished only to leave and thought he would, after seeing Foltest through the successful siege of La Valette Castle. Fate had other things in mind for him, though.

Geralt suffers amnesia after an event in which, as far as much of the world is concerned, he died. In Rivia, humans fell upon nonhumans in a massacre, and Geralt sought to defend the persecuted against the mob. In the terrible slaughter that ensued, a peasant rammed a pitchfork through the witcher's chest. His body was placed in a boat and he floated into a mist. He's not quite sure what happened between that time and when he had a number of adventures concerning the Order of the Flaming Rose, a Scoia'tael uprising, and a certain criminal uprising. That is a tale for another time, though. For now, Geralt is concerned with discovering who framed him for the murder of King Foltest, and why.

Triss Merigold

One of Geralt's closest friends and allies, though their relationship is at best a very complicated one, Triss Merigold first grew famous for her striking auburn hair, a rare and glorious shade surely enhanced by her magic. She later grew famous as the "Fourteenth One," or "Fourteenth of the Hill," for it was mistakenly thought she had died during the Battle of Sodden Hill. She was restored, though much sobered by her experience. With that new maturity she thrived in King Foltest's court and earned the king's trust as his advisor. Her relationship with Geralt runs hot and cold, but in Foltest's court, their old flame had most definitely rekindled.

Triss remains with Geralt after he leaves with Roche to try to hunt down Foltest's murderer. In practical terms, she had little choice; her relationship with Geralt meant that she, too, was suspected of having a hand in Foltest's murder. Her power is instrumental in saving Roche and Geralt from the Scoia'tael upon their arrival in Flotsam. She also proved to be an acquaintance of the sorceress Síle de Tansarville, whom Geralt meets in Flotsam. The chill in Triss's voice during the meeting was unmistakable. If Geralt was a more perceptive man, he might have taken it as the first sign that Síle de Tansarville was a woman to be watched carefully.

Letho

Letho of Gulet first appeared before Geralt in the guise of a blind monk, revealing his true nature for only the seconds required to end Foltest's life. Then he leapt from a window with uncanny grace, leaving Geralt to be discovered with the body. It seemed to Geralt that this man must be working with the Scoia'tael, and Roche's information supported this theory. Geralt, Triss, and Roche head to the border with Aedirn and the trading post Flotsam in search of Letho, who all believe is the true kingslayer. In time, Letho proves himself a master manipulator who is using the Scoia'tael purely for his own ends.

He is a difficult opponent for Geralt, for Letho is a fellow witcher. Though he is of the southern School of the Viper rather than Geralt's School of the Wolf, they walk the same Path and should, in a just world, be friends rather than enemies. Letho, it seems, has abandoned the Path to organize a handful of fellow witchers from the School of the Viper into a force with no purpose beyond assassinating the kings of the north. To what end this regicide might serve a group of witchers is beyond Geralt's comprehension, and Letho does not seem interested in explaining himself.

Vernon Roche

Roche is the head of Temeria's Special Forces unit, the Blue Stripes. He is indispensable to his king and thoroughly detested by most everyone else. As leader of the Blue Stripes, Roche organized operations against the Scoia'tael and other nonhuman rebellions. He is a slow and methodical man, too. After listening to Geralt's explanation of what happened at La Valette Castle, he does not believe that Geralt killed King Foltest.

Instead, he decides to cooperate with Geralt to seek out the killer. He helps Geralt track the kingslayer to a group of Scoia'tael active near the borders of Temeria and Aedirn, around a dreary trading post named Flotsam. Roche wishes to find the man who slew his king, but he also wishes to capture the infamous Scoia'tael leader Iorveth, who is reported to be in the vicinity of Flotsam.

Above all else, Roche is a patriot. He lives and breathes for Temeria, since he's had little else in his life to believe in. He will do whatever he has to, at whatever cost, to keep his country safe and secure its future. This includes doing some dark and terrible things, too. You don't became a spymaster without getting your hands dirty.

Iorveth

Elves are renowned by humans for their beauty, even as humans take their land, their culture, and ultimately their freedom. In Iorveth's case, a human succeeded in taking his beauty, too. Beneath the covering on his face is hideous scarring from a wound that only an eternal elf might suffer and live. Iorveth's foul temper has become as legendary as his scars, as he leads the Scoia'tael commandos in raids and acts of terror against the hated humans. He has become the symbol of the Aen Seidhe's hatred of the human race, immortalized in story and song as something of an elven boogeyman.

It is not hard to imagine why Iorveth might wish to slay the kings of the north, for they are humans like any others, but it is puzzling why he'd work with a witcher to do it. Iorveth is not a man prone to explaining himself, and his first encounter with Geralt and Roche ends in a barrage of arrows. To men like Roche, Iorveth is and always will be a simple thug who accomplishes little more than slaying humans, without mercy or discernment. It is certainly true that Iorveth is a dangerous man with no love of humans.

The world is too complicated a place for a man like Iorveth to be exactly what he appears to be, though. Few elven freedom fighters are content merely to slay humans all their lives, and Iorveth is no different. He knows the Scoia'tael cannot hide in the forests eating nuts forever. He has a grander plan and a purpose in mind for Letho's regicides, though it is one that will inevitably put him at odds with Letho. It would not be impossible to become Iorveth's ally in his fight for freedom, though it seems any such alliance would be brief at best.

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen

Shilard Fitz-Oesterlen is the emissary chosen to represent the interests of the Emperor of Nilfgaard, also called the "White Flame Dancing on the Graves of His Foes," to the various kings of the north. Though he always frames his deeds in a way to make them seem to the north's advantage, rest assured that he truly cares about nothing but the advancement of Nilfgaard's interests. Fitz-Oesterlen is a consummate diplomat who excels in concealing his true motives from others. Though he says he is on a mission of peace and prosperity, a man like him could easily start a war without appearing to have done anything at all.

Dandelion

The wandering troubadour called Dandelion was born the Viscount de Lettenhove and forsook his title and aristocratic duties in the pursuit of freedom. Dandelion is famed for his talents as a performer and his ability to compose original ballads, many of them based on the adventures of his friend Geralt of Rivia. Dandelion is famed throughout the kingdoms of the north, so as a result, Geralt has acquired a bit of a reputation, too. It is more than Geralt would tolerate from a friend he valued less than Dandelion. It sometimes seems that Dandelion is Geralt's best and perhaps only true friend.

Dandelion's ability to insinuate himself into royal courts throughout the north made him a valuable agent of Vernon Roche, and it is the intention to meet with Dandelion that initially brings Roche and Geralt to Flotsam. Upon entering the town, the witcher and his friends find that Dandelion is on the verge of being executed for debauchery, due to an incident that the bard has been unwilling to elaborate upon involving a pair of twin whores, a town guard, a dog, a cat, and an oil lamp. As usual, Geralt must extract Dandelion from the trouble he's gotten himself into.

Zoltan Chivay

Geralt and Dandelion met Zoltan Chivay three years ago, during the north's first great war with Nilfgaard. He fought at the great Battle of Brenna, which repelled the invaders, along with a great many other dwarves in the Mahakam Volunteer Detachment. After the war, Zoltan thought he would settle down and go into business, but his engagement soured and with it his business prospects. Geralt is eager and willing to pay back Zoltan's many favors to him during the war by saving him from being hanged in Flotsam's town square.

Zoltan was taken to the scaffolds because the local authorities accused him of colluding with the Scoia'tael, a charge Zoltan vehemently denies. Still, he clearly knows something more about the Scoia'tael than a mild-mannered dwarf properly should, and it's even rumored that he is personally acquainted with the dread Scoia'tael leader Iorveth. It is certainly impossible, given the current fractious state of relations among the races in the north, for any law-abiding dwarf not to feel a certain sympathy for the freedom that the Scoia'tael are trying to win for nonhumans, if misguidedly.

Bernard Loredo

Loredo is the commandant of Flotsam's town watch and the de facto ruler of the town. He enforces law and order diligently, though with a heavy hand and more than one suggestion of corruption swirling beneath the surface of the small town's politics. He allows Zoltan and Dandelion to escape the hangman when Geralt and Roche arrive, though clearly not out of any sense of fear or pity. Loredo detests nonhumans and particularly detests the Scoia'tael, who are the main threat to Flotsam's safety (and his ability to profit from it). Loredo has yet to turn on the nonhumans of Flotsam, but those who live under his watch know that it could happen at any time, for virtually any reason.

Because Flotsam is a trading post, much material wealth passes through it on the way to larger and grander destinations. There can be little doubt that Loredo has been lining his own pockets with bribes and stuffing his compound with misappropriated goods. There also seem to be links between Loredo's operations and a group of local bandits led by a foul bruiser named Dmitri, though most peasants choose to turn a blind eye to this. Loredo keeps them happy by stuffing the prison barge at the docks with captured Scoia'tael. Capturing Iorveth would make Loredo a local hero and make his stranglehold over the town stronger than ever. He would need a strong ally to pull it off, though—an ally like a witcher.

Dethmold

Geralt of Rivia first met the sorcerer Dethmold on Thanedd Island, where the first Council and Conclave that governed the actions of mages fell apart in a bloody coup. At that time Dethmold tried to remain neutral in the events, along with his brother Drithelm, both of whom served King Esterad of Kovir. This effort was futile, and Drithelm was killed as the coup wracked the mage community. Dethmold fled, and since then his feelings of insecurity have escalated into full-blown unscrupulous paranoia.

Dethmold now serves as advisor and court sorcerer to King Henselt of Kaedwen. He is willing to go to any lengths to serve Henselt's interests and to ignore every rule that once governed the practice of magic, even proving himself willing to practice the dread art of necromancy. Dethmold is fearsome as the de facto leader of Henselt's secret police and investigator of all secrets. Dethmold takes any threat to Henselt's power personally, and his wrath has all the flamboyance and cruelty that has made sorcery feared and hated throughout the kingdoms of the north.